

We read in old records that as early as the days of the Tokugawa (1603-1868) old maps and plans were treasured as precious things; but the fate of these collections is unknown. Geographical maps are mentioned for the first time in the history of Japan in connection with the great reforms of the Taikwa period (A.D. 645-649). In the *Nihongi*, the second oldest chronicles of Japan, we find under the year 646 an Imperial edict decreeing that the boundary lines of the provinces shall be surveyed and either chorographies or maps of those districts presented to the government. Obviously, initial efforts were purely relegated to provincial and cadastral mapping efforts. The first attempts to draw general maps of Japan were most probably made about this time. A map of this kind, assigned by tradition to Gyogi-Bosatsu (670-749), has been preserved to our day in the form of the general map of Japan reproduced in the *Shugaisho* Encyclopedia of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (edition of the Keicho period, 1596-1614). A map of the third year of Kagen, that is, of the year 1305, in the possession of the Temple of Ninna-ji near Kyoto, is regarded as the earliest known map of Japan. It is thought to be a copy of a map of the *Gyogi* type of the Heian period (end of the eighth to middle of the ninth century).

Due to Japan's very well-enforced policy of isolation until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, before Japan came into contact, through the Portuguese and Spanish, with European culture, the Japanese conception of the world comprised practically nothing outside the neighboring countries of Korea, China and the Ryukyu Islands, with which more or less regular relations were maintained. The 15<sup>th</sup> century encyclopedia, *Shugaisho*, also contains a map of India (*Tenjiku*), in which the names of several other countries - *Kittan* (the kingdom of the Liao) (present-day Iran), appear, but probably the ideas connected with these names were very confused. Of world maps in the real sense one can only speak after the arrival of the Europeans. Beyond the realm of Japan lay worlds formed through fascination and the imagination. In 1543, however, this changed with the appearance of the Portuguese, who journeyed to Japan in the pursuit of new lands to develop trade and to spread Christianity. The Portuguese and their culture had a strong impact on Japanese thoughts and activities, including the creation of many maps and folding screens with European motifs and new views of the world at large. These maps and screens prompted viewers to acknowledge a more distinctive "Self". The end of the 16<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries was a transitional moment for both the Japanese and Portugal. Religiously, the Portuguese Jesuit missionaries were in conflict with the Japanese government and their authority was undermined by Mendicants from the Philippines. These conflicts were compounded further by the spread of Protestantism in Europe. Similarly, after a short prosperous trade in Asia, rising economic and political power of the Netherlands and England gradually pushed Portuguese trade out of Asia.

Although the famous 1602 world map entitled *Kunyu Wanguo Quantu* [A Map of the Myriad Countries of the World] by the Italian Jesuit Father Matteo Ricci was making its rounds in Asia, it was largely a "Chinese thing", and did not become incredibly popular until it was copied later in Japan by Nagakubo Sekisui, an Edo period geographer and Confucian scholar, described by Yanagita Kunio as the founder of Japanese geography. Sekisui is credited with the creation of numerous maps and travel writings, and innovations such as the first Japanese map to employ lines of latitude and longitude.

One of the first *Japanese* world maps in Japan, however, was actually a Buddhist map, which means its primary purpose was a religious one. Throughout the eighth century Buddhism became entrenched in the Japanese cultural scene. Buddhism brought to Japan a Hindu cosmological view that had been reshaped in China and was to undergo Japanese revision as new information became available. The first Japanese Buddhist “world” maps did not incorporate all the countries of the world. These maps, called *nansenbushu*, consisted of only three countries: China, India, and Japan. China is in the northeastern section, India makes up the inverted triangle shape at the bottom, and Japan is an island off to the East. These maps centered on the *Buddhist world*, and therefore emphasize Buddhist landmarks. The whirlpool depicted in the middle of these maps, for example, is considered the “center of the universe”, which is a lake where Queen Maya gave birth to the Buddha.

In Buddhist philosophy, a giant mountain called *Mount Sumeru* (*Shumisen*) was believed to stand at the center of the world. The first map below shows a 3-D model of the Buddhist world, *Shumisen-gizu*, organized around *Mount Sumeru*. The huge mountain of *Sumeru* towers up in the center, enclosed by a series of eight concentric oceans and mountain ranges. The outermost of these, called *Tecchisen* (Cakravada Mountain), is located at the very edge of the world, and in the ocean just inside it (i.e. the outermost ocean) islands are depicted to the north, south, east and west of *Mount Sumeru* respectively. Of these four islands the one to the south of center, shaped like an inverted triangle (to the lower right of *Mount Sumeru*), is *Nansenbushu* (*Jambu-dviipa*) where human beings reside. Portrayal of *Nansenbushu* is essential to all Buddhist world maps. The oldest extant example is the 14<sup>th</sup> century *Gotenjiku-zu* in the Horyuji collection, but maps in this lineage continued to be produced through the Edo period. The *Map of Nansenbushu*, shown below, is one such example. Looking at the inverted triangle shape denoting the Indian subcontinent we can see the Himalayan Mountains indicated in the central area, and so that tract of land clearly represents India (*Tenjiku*). In the far northeast corner of this continent we can see China (*Shintan*) and in the eastern sea at the very edge of the map, the island of Japan.

Our habitable world, according to the Buddhist cosmographical view, is a continent called *Jambu-dviipa* lying to the south of *Mount Sumeru*. The continent is said to be wide in the north and pointed in the south, having in its center *Lake Anavatapta* from which flow four large rivers. This is to be considered as a topographical reflection of the Indian peninsula, *Lake Anavatapta* symbolizing Lake Manasarovar in the Himalayas and the four rivers representing the Ganges, the Indus, the Oxus and the Tarim. Together with Buddhism, this geographical conception of the world was introduced into China and thence into Japan, where it found expression in various types of Buddhist maps. These maps, therefore have some characteristics analogous to the Christian world maps of the Middle Ages, for they both express their religious view of the world. But while the latter gradually went out of use in Europe from the beginning of the modern age, the former claimed, with popular support, a right to existence until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in opposition to the newer world maps of European origin which had been gradually gaining ground from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This maybe attributed largely to the extraordinary circumstances of Japan during her national isolation from 1639 to 1854.

The Japanese Buddhist world maps still extant, as well as those brought over from China, are many and varied both in form and in substance. According to Nobuo Muroga and Kazutaka, it is interesting to note, however, that they all developed from one and the same origin. What is regarded as their prototype is a map generally called



*Gotenjiku Zu* [Map of the Five Indies], some copies of which have been handed down even to this day. These maps represent a quaint, sea-girt shield-shaped continent of *Jambu-dvīpa* which means the whole world. But the area displayed on them barely comprises India and Central Asia, which were then called in China *Si-yü* or the Western Regions. The place-names given are with few exceptions from the *Si-yü-ki*, a record of pilgrimage written by Hsüan-tsang the well-known Chinese Buddhist priest, who visited India in the seventh century. His pilgrimage-routes traced in a red line as if covering all over the continent and China itself is indicated only as the point of his departure and arrival. They may, therefore be classed as a peculiar kind of map of India which represents the pilgrimage of this celebrated Buddhist traveler.

The oldest extant map of this kind is the aforementioned *Gotenjiku Zu* [Map of the Five Indies], 177x 166.5 cm, drawn by Jukai, a Buddhist priest, in 1364, now preserved in the Horyuji Temple at Nara. On this map we see, in addition to the mythical *Anukodatchi*-pond which represents the center of the universe and from which flow four rivers in the four cardinal directions, in the left-hand upper corner of the map a region designated as *Euroba*, around which are grouped, clockwise, the following named countries: *Umukari* (Hungary?), *Oranda*, *Barantan*, *Komo* (Holland, the country of the redhaired), *Aruhaniya* (Albania), *Itaryia* (Italy), *Suransa* (France) and *Inkeresu* (England). Europe, which had no place at all in earlier Buddhist world maps, makes this one of the first Japanese maps to depict this western region.

Africa appears as a small island in the western sea identified as the "*Land of Western Women*." Hiroshi Nakamura regarded this map, therefore, simply a mutilated copy of the *Map of the Five Indies* which is said to have come to Japan about 835, and a copy of which, dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, is preserved in the Horyuji Temple of Nara, Japan.

In the surrounding margin of this map are many quotations taken chiefly from the *Si-yü-ki* to describe the natural features and the customs and manners of India. Besides this map, an unfinished copy of it by a priest named Zenjo is also preserved in the same temple; and maps owned by Prof. Shintaro Ayuzawa (Tokyo), the Jōgonin Temple (Shiga Pref.) and the Ryūikoku University (Kyoto) can likewise be considered to come within the same group. There is another group of *Map of the Five Indies* which varies a little from these maps only as regard Hsüan-tsang's route and in not having written on the outside of the continent the names of remote countries as *Kokoku* [Land of Barbarians], *Saidaijokoku* [Western country of women] and *Konchikoku* [Golden Land = Swarna-bhumi].

This new Japanese world map, called *Nansenbushu bankoku Shoka no zu*, printed in 1710 (100 years after Ricci's map), is the first *nansenbushu* that attempted to display the rest of the world. Of course remember that this is a *Buddhist* map, meaning things are mapped by religious significance (rather than actual accuracy), meaning India and China get a big portion of the map... most of it, in fact. It is thought that Ricci's map had made some circulation by this time, and the author of this map heard about the rest of the world enough to make some educated guesses. Then again, the map with only India, China, and Japan was not particularly accurate from a cartographic standpoint.

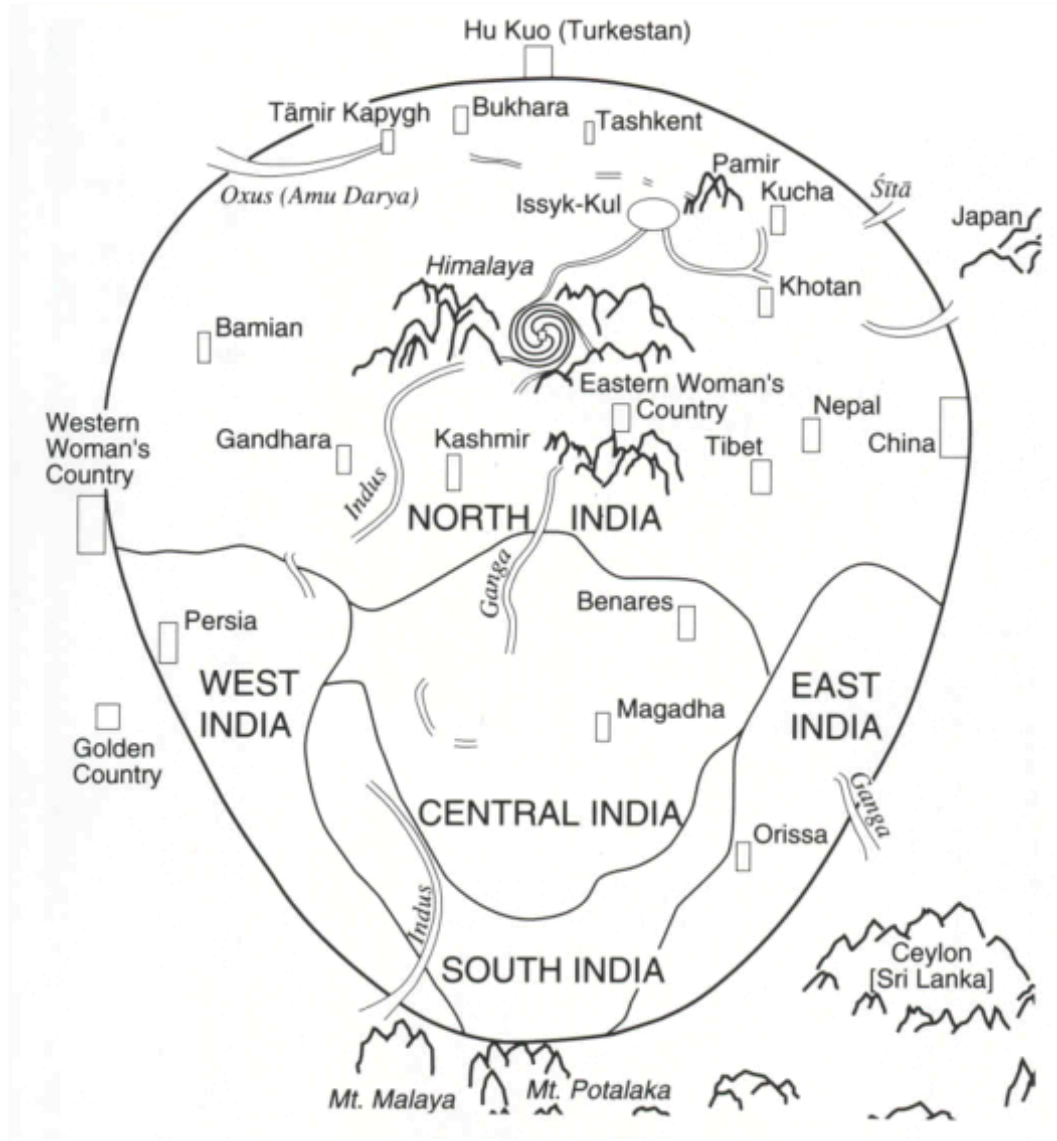


*Shumisen-gizu* (A Representation of Mount Sumeru), detail, first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Museum Collection.





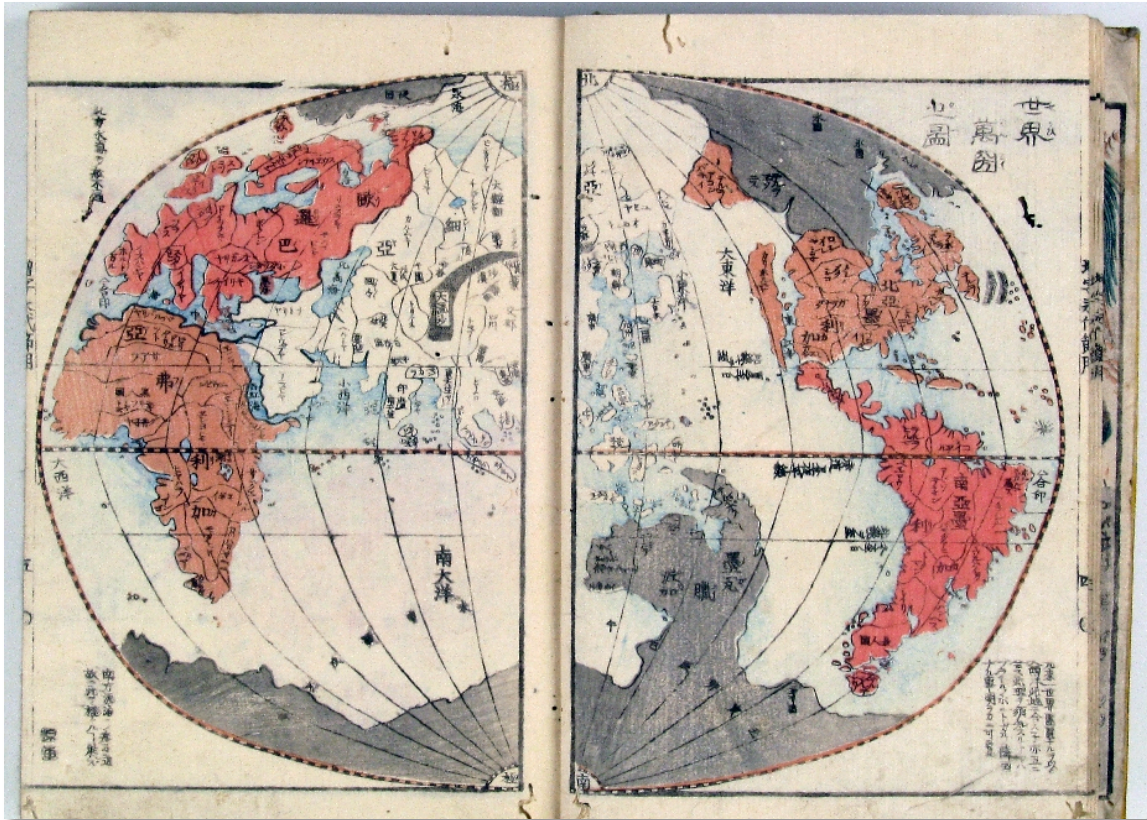
*Gotenjiku-Zu* [Map of the Five Indies], 1744, 167.5 x 134 cm  
An atypical *nansenbushu* Buddhist world map emphasizing the three major Buddhist countries of China, India and Japan



*Interpretative drawing of the Gotenjiku Zu [Map of the Five Regions of India].*

*This traditional Buddhist depiction of the civilized world (mainly India and the Himalayan regions, with a token nod to China) divides India into five regions: north, east, south, west and central India. Each of these five regions is again divided into many kingdoms – those current during the career of Buddha. The Himalayas are shown as snow-capped peaks in the center of the map, and Mount Sumeru, the mythical center of the cosmos, is depicted in the whirlpool-like form. A much-reduced China (Chang'an is visible on the plain at the upper right) is labeled "Great Tang". Directly across from China, over the stormy seas, the islands of Kyushu and Shikoku and the form of Honshu can be detected.*





Japanese world map, 1635

The *Bankoku sōzu* maps, displayed below, are made up of a pair of screens which seem to be hand painted on manuscript-like paper. Also, these maps, some of which date to the year 1600, are the oldest of the Japanese maps of the University of British Columbia Tokugawa Era collection. In a fashion similar to hanging scrolls, both screens have been painted in vertically which suggest that they could have been displayed on a wall as pieces of art rather than practical pieces. One screen depicts a colorful world map with the different continents and countries labeled and displayed in a circular quadrant with indications of the four cardinal directions. The second screen displays a diversity of ethnicity from around the world (forty couples) each labeled with the name of their countries and some with additional information. At the top of the screen there is a legend which seems to explain the reasoning behind such illustrations and its translation reveals that the purpose of this piece is to differentiate people, their culture and to “serve as an aid to the investigation of things and the accomplishment of knowledge”.

Before observing further the pair of screens which constitute the *Bankoku sōzu*, it is important to note that due to the ancient nature of those documents, the dates of origin sometimes differ from one source to another and sometimes the artists are unknown. Despite this challenge, it is still possible to draw enough information from multiple sources to make sense of a visual piece of history.

When considering that the *Bankoku sōzu* dates from the year 1600 or the year 1645 depending on the source, it is interesting to think of how the Japanese people of the Tokugawa era could have had such extensive knowledge of the world when the historical context at the time involved limited contact with powers outside of Asia. For instance, the ruling class imposed multiple restrictions on trades and foreign interactions

in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Decrees were enforced forbidding maps, under pain of death, to leave the country; and in order to render the ban more effective, the building of large ships was also prohibited. Under these circumstances, there was no longer any necessity to improve marine charts. And the importation of new books and maps, of course, practically ceased, so that Japanese scholars learned almost nothing about the geographical explorations and discoveries of the rest of the world. Comparison of what is probably the earliest extant world map of the Shoho period (1644-1647, the *Bankoku sozu* screen map) with the approximately 45 years later map by Ishikawa Ryusen shows what a falling off there was in geographical knowledge during the few decades succeeding the isolation of the country.

Moreover, with the *sakoku* policies, established between the years 1640-1859, pre-modern Japan entered an era known as the “closed country era” and who left and entered the country was controlled. In other words, the Tokugawa era which was first led by the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616) (who set the precedents to be followed by his legacy) was an era of centralized and bureaucratized power under a military regime.

However, despite such control on their borders, pre-modern Japan encountered and accepted to remain in contact, to a certain extent, with two main foreign powers besides China: the Portuguese and the Dutch. It is said that with those European encounters and with the transfer of cultural knowledge that followed, that the Japanese of the Tokugawa era were able to obtain information about what the “unknown world” look like.

Records show that the first Portuguese arrived in pre-modern Japan in 1543 after a shipwreck, in the southern coastal area and that the Jesuits sponsored by Portugal arrived a few years later in 1549. Following this, the Japanese started copying the maps the Portuguese brought with them in order to build their knowledge of Asia and fused it with their own knowledge of their waterways and coastal line to perfect their navigational maps.

However, the missionaries and their “Christianizing activities” that came with trading with the Portuguese started to be perceived as threats to the safety of state established by the Tokugawa clan. In other words, the new type of religious loyalty was upsetting the political loyalties with the shogun, so the Portuguese faced multiple criticisms, persecutions (first martyrdoms in 1597) and restrictions (i.e. on trades, heavy taxations) and were eventually banned from Japan in 1639.

Along the side of such developments, other records reveal that the Dutch, aboard the ship *Liefde* reached the eastern coast of pre-modern Japan on April 19, 1600 in the area which is known today as Kyushu. Contrary to the Portuguese, the Dutch and their Dutch East India Company (created in 1602) presented themselves and Holland as an independent country and power without any religious or political motives who wanted to trade with the Japanese (and at the same time extend their presence into the wider world to build up their riches). The shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu is said to have been quite interested by what the *Liefde* was carrying, mainly by its weapons. Also, because of how the Dutch differentiated their faith from the Portuguese (their rivals who described them as “pirates” to the Japanese).

Under the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu the Dutch and the Japanese had thriving trades in artillery and ammunition, but other types of trades and cultural exchanges influenced Japanese culture and politics. Following the numerous restrictions and bans on Christianity and its religious art which used to be copied from Jesuits with the goal of



promoting the beliefs, the form of art which survived was a practical and secular one, cartography.

One Dutch artist whose maps are said to have reached Japan through the network of trades is Willem Jansz. Blaeu's (1571-1638) who experimented with maps of the world and created a version called *Nova Orbis Terrarum Geographica* in 1606-07. The original map is said to now be lost, but its influences such as its decorative aspect and the illustrated geography can be seen on the Japanese screens maps such as in the *Bankoku Ezu: Sekai zu* which is dated between 1610 and 1614.

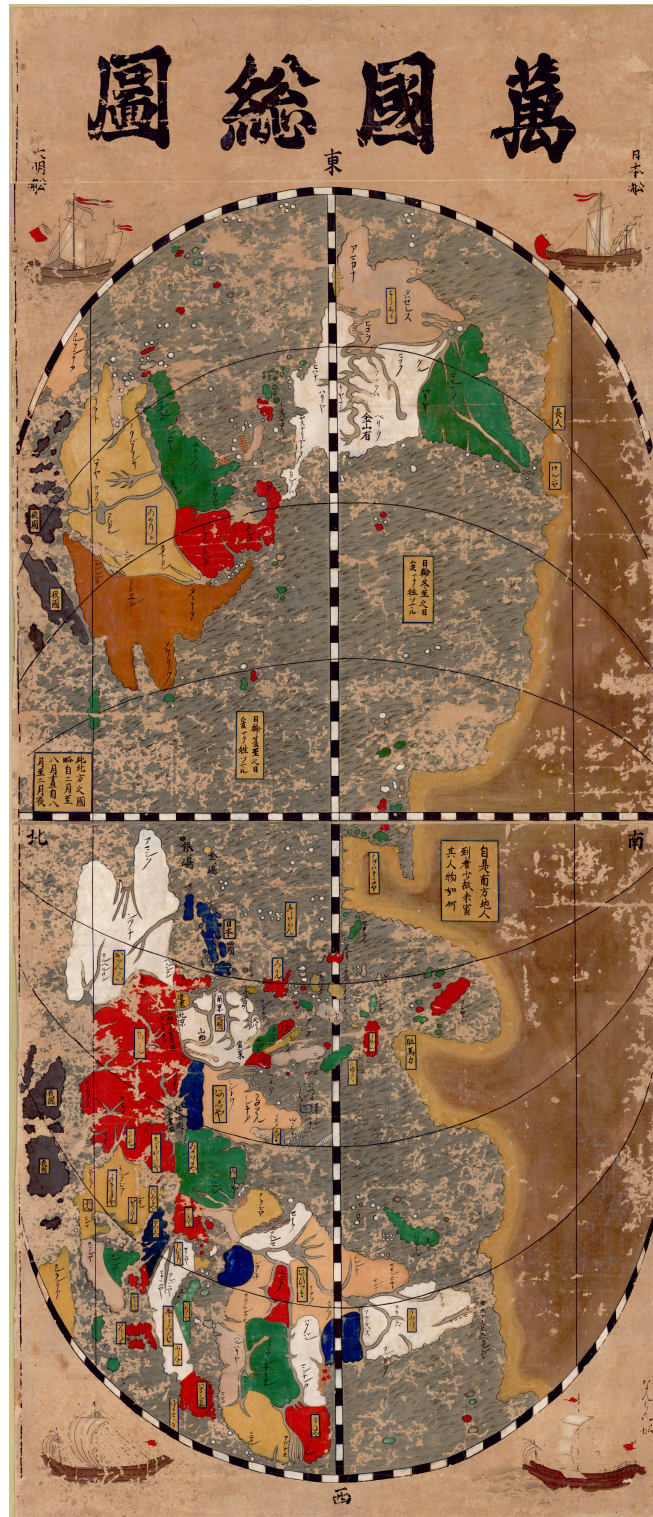


What is also interesting to note on this map compared to the *Bankoku sōzu* of 1645 is how the style used on the different ethnic couples reflects the perspective or the "gaze" used by the artist. For instance, in the *Bankoku Ezu: Sekai zu* the Japanese couple is illustrated in a very Italianesque manner which does not fit with Japanese standards or vision of themselves, but most likely fitted with European standards.

In fact, the woman's kimono looks more like a dress and she has long curly hair while the man is clearly shaved (which in Japan was not as manly). However, in the later creation of the *Bankoku sōzu*, the artist seems to have reclaimed Japanese standards and identity in the representation of the Japanese couple while conserving some of the Western influences for other aspects of the screens (unfamiliar ethnicities based on Western's sources). In the case of the Japanese couple, the man is now dressed like a warrior, a bearded samurai ready for battle and the woman, who is assisting her husband with his sword, is wearing the appropriate garments and fashion (straight long hair and whitened skin) one is expecting to see according to her high ranking status.



Details from the *Bankoku sōzu*:  
Japanese couple

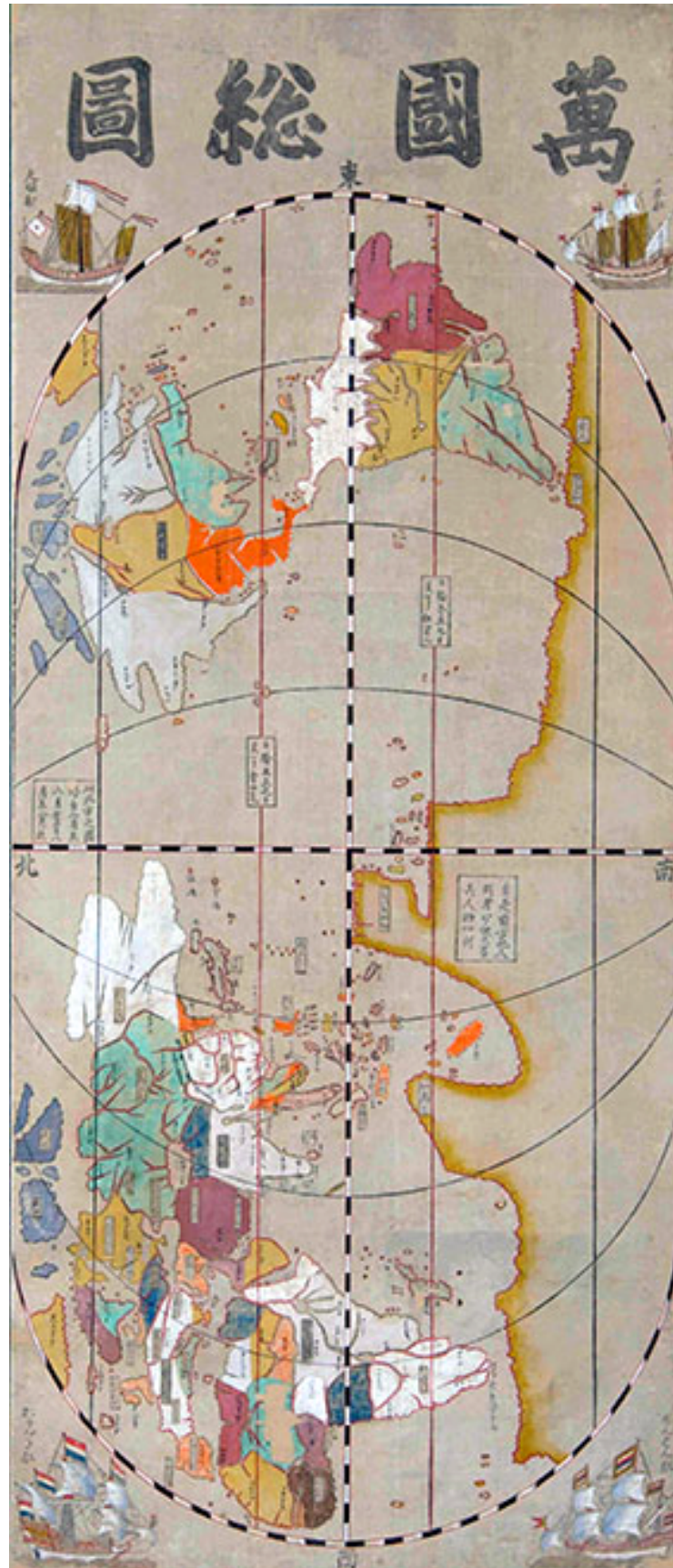


*Bankoku Sozu* (Map of the World), 1645 44.8 x 22 inches/134.5 x 57.6 cm  
 A double-sided woodcut found in the Japanese Maps of the Tokugawa Era  
 On the reverse (below), are illustrated examples of the peoples of the world.  
 Designed to hang with East at the top.

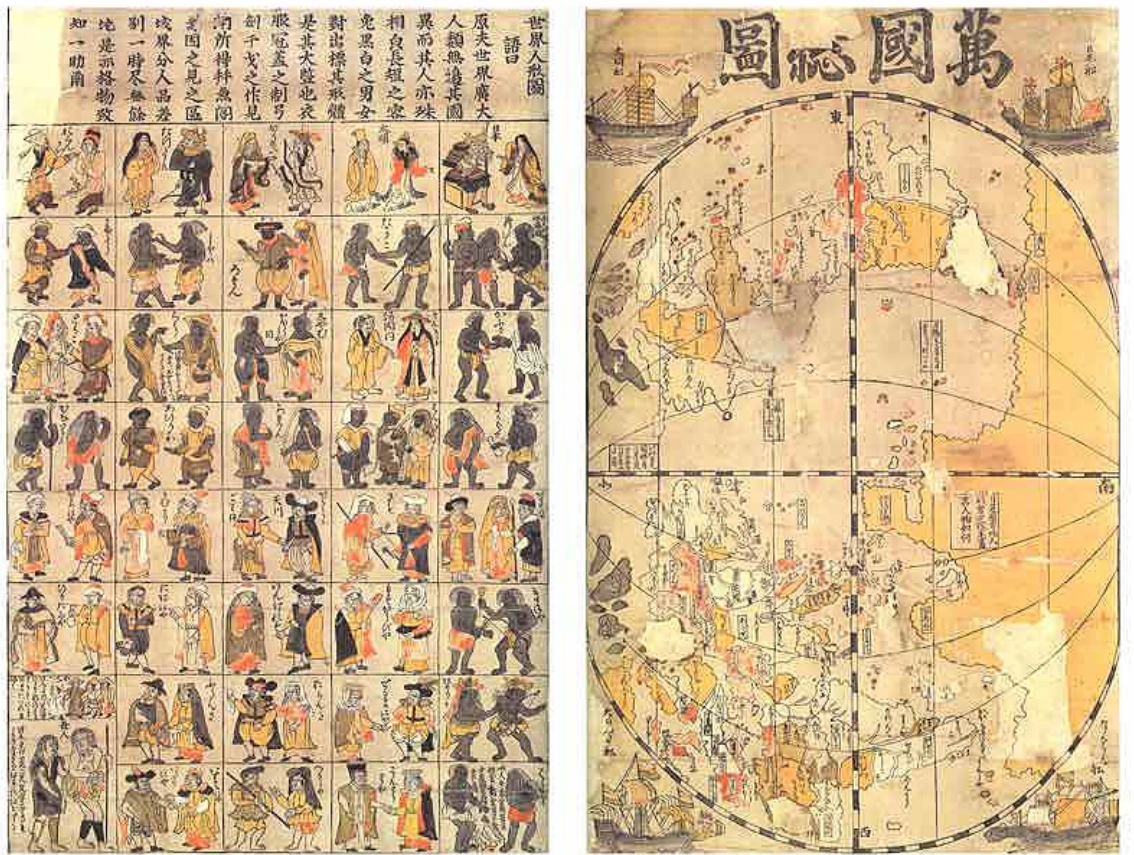
University of British Columbia Library - Rare Books and Special Collections.







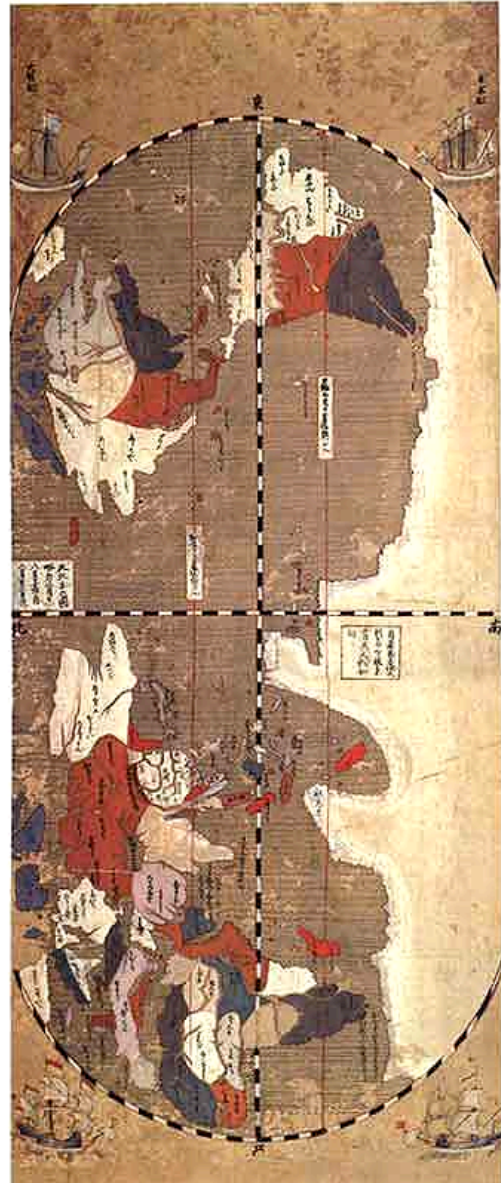




*Bankoku Sōzu, Sekai Ninei Zu* [Map of the World and Pictures of Various Peoples], 1652, woodcut (a pair of hanging scrolls), 65 x 41.5 cm, Kobe City Museum of Namban Art

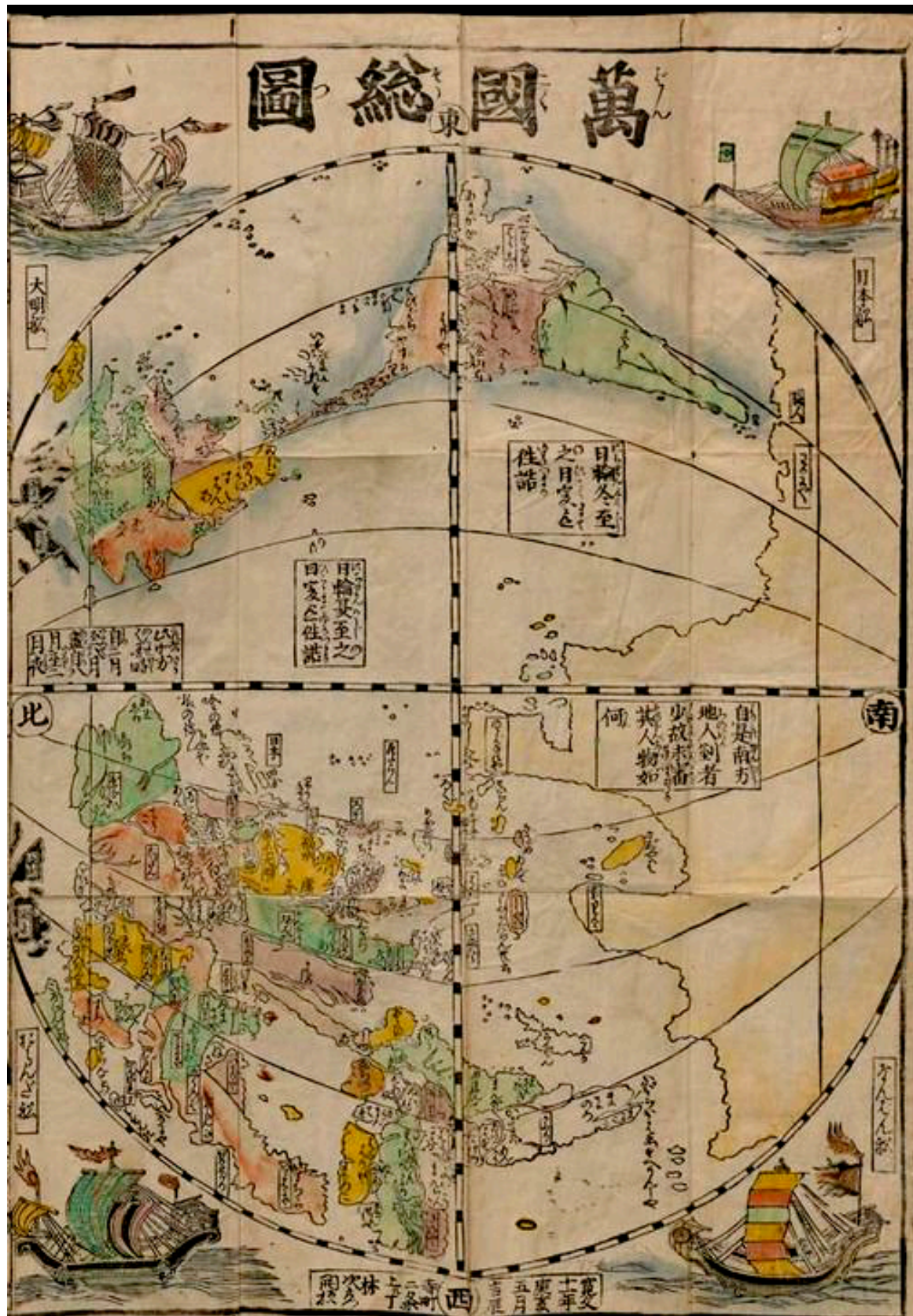
One of the most important works based upon the Ricci-type world map is the *Bankoku sozu*, first printed in the year Shōhō tori, 1645. It is generally known as the earliest printed Japanese world map in Western style. There are several versions of this map, the most "original" copy now being the one in the Shimonoseki City Chofu Museum, Yamaguchi Prefecture. This version consists of two sheets (woodblock print) later colored by hand. One sheet shows a map in an oval projection with four different ships in each corner, the other carries images of 40 ethnic groups (hence its common name *Jinbutsuzu*) and all wearing traditional outfits are drawn on the "*Sekai Jinbutsu Zu*." Nationalities depicted in the plates include "Daimin" (Great Ming, now China), "Kaurai" (Goryeo, now Korea), "Inkeresu" (England), "Mosukaubiya" (Moscow) and "Roson" (Luzon, Philippines). At the top of the screen there is a legend that seems to explain the reasoning behind such illustrations and its translation reveals that the purpose of this piece is to differentiate people, their culture and to "serve as an aid to the investigation of things and the accomplishment of knowledge"



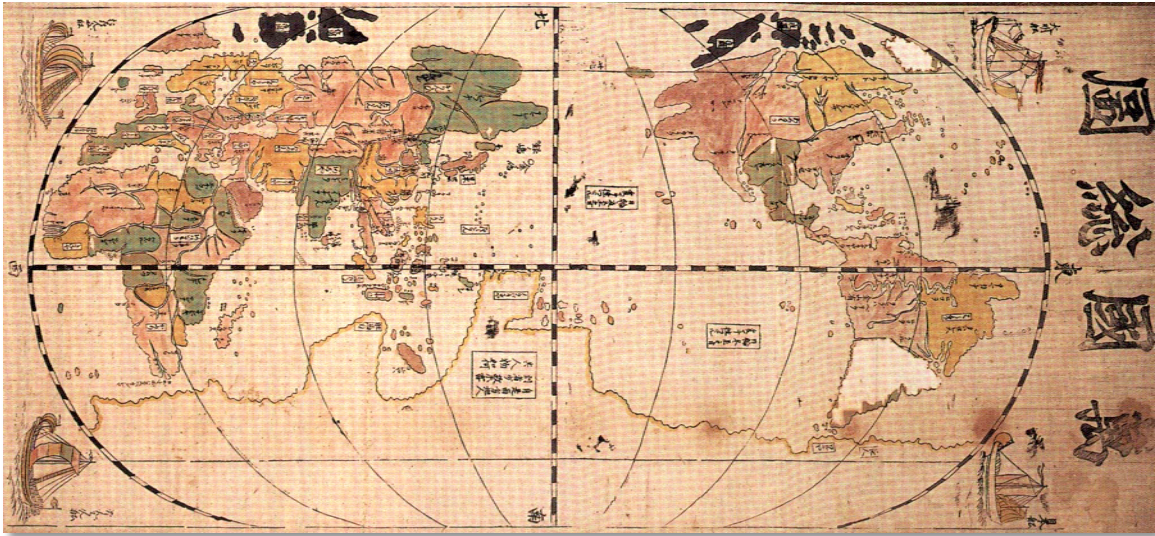


*Bankoku Sōzu*, map of the world accompanied by a sheet showing the peoples of the world. 1645, woodcut, 134 x 57.6 cm, Kobe City Museum of Namban Art

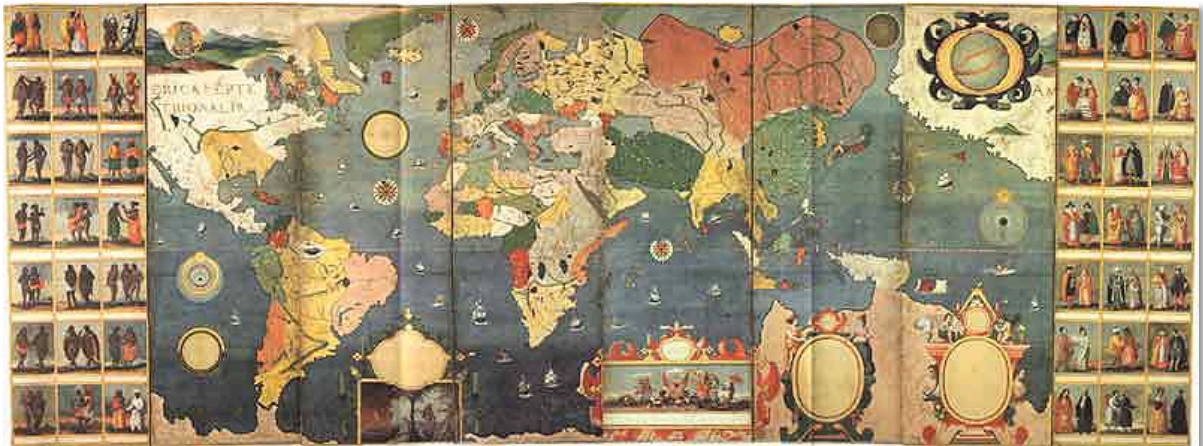








*Bankoku Sozu, 1645*

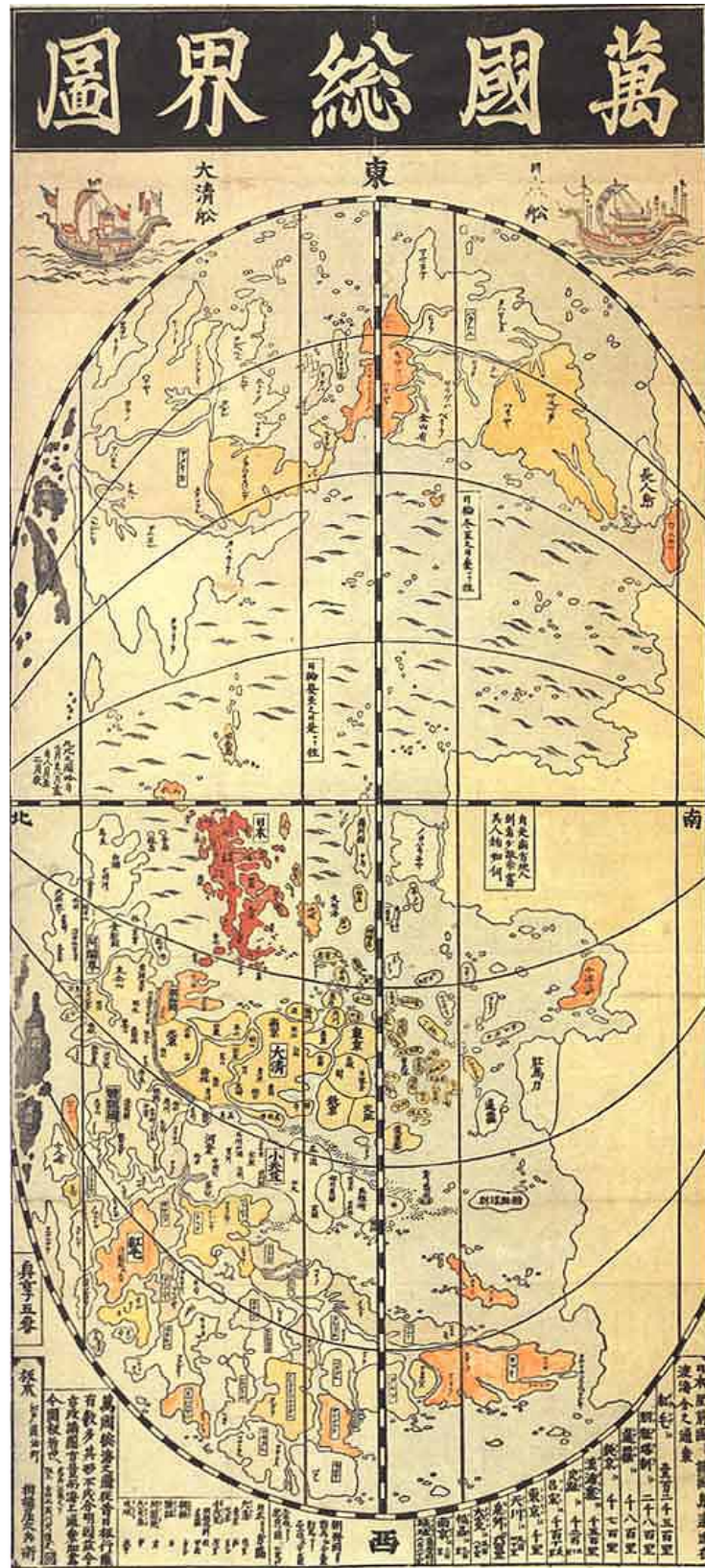


Unknown Author. *Bankoku Ezu: Sekai zu* [Map of the World and Twenty-eight Famous cities], Momoyama to Edo period, 17<sup>th</sup> century. Manuscript – a pair of eight-fold screens. The Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shōzōkan, Tokyo, 178 x 465 cm



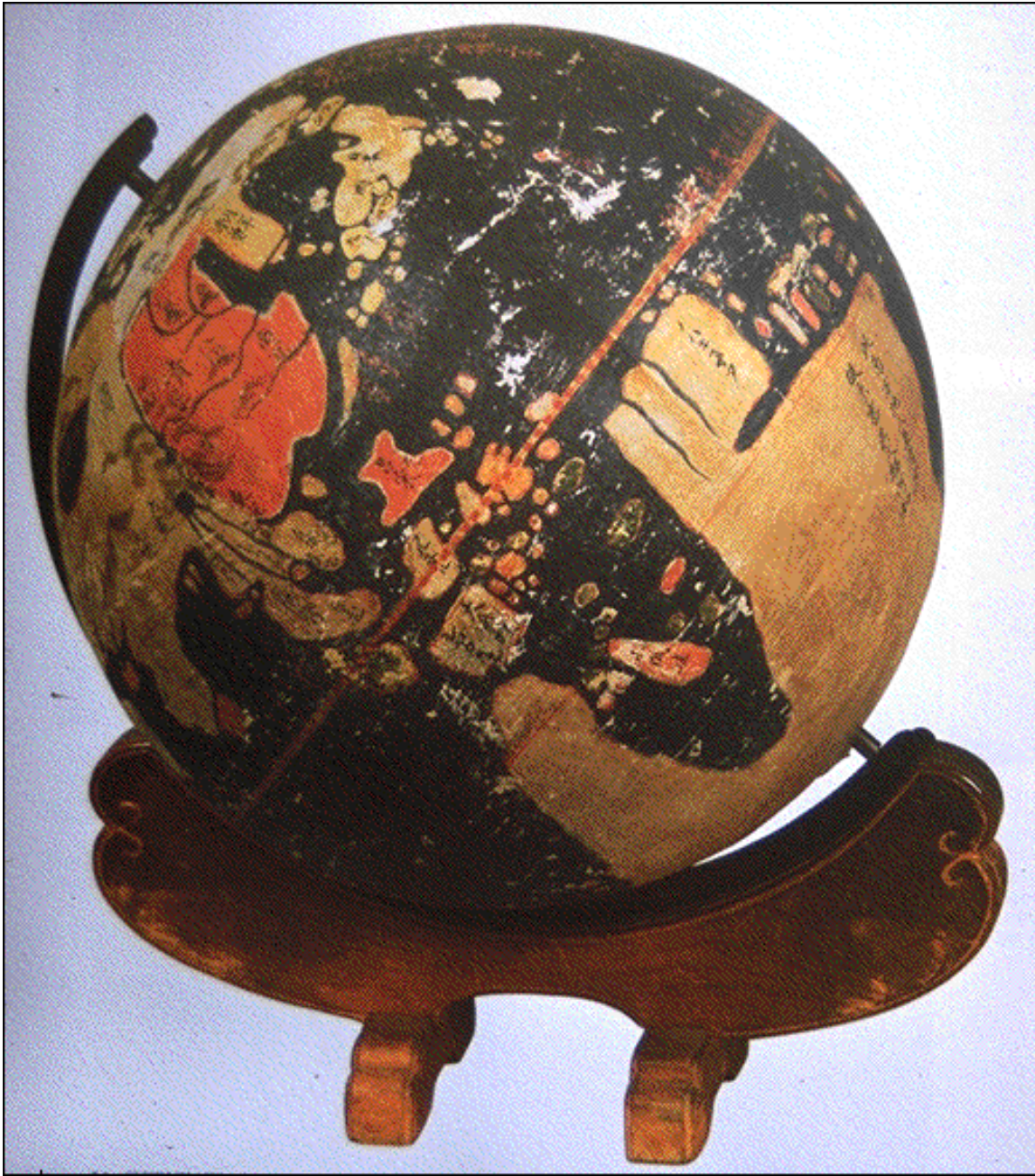
*Kon-yo Bankoku Zenzu*, a copy of Matteo Ricci's world map, early 17<sup>th</sup> century, Manuscript – six hanging scrolls, 164 x 374 cm





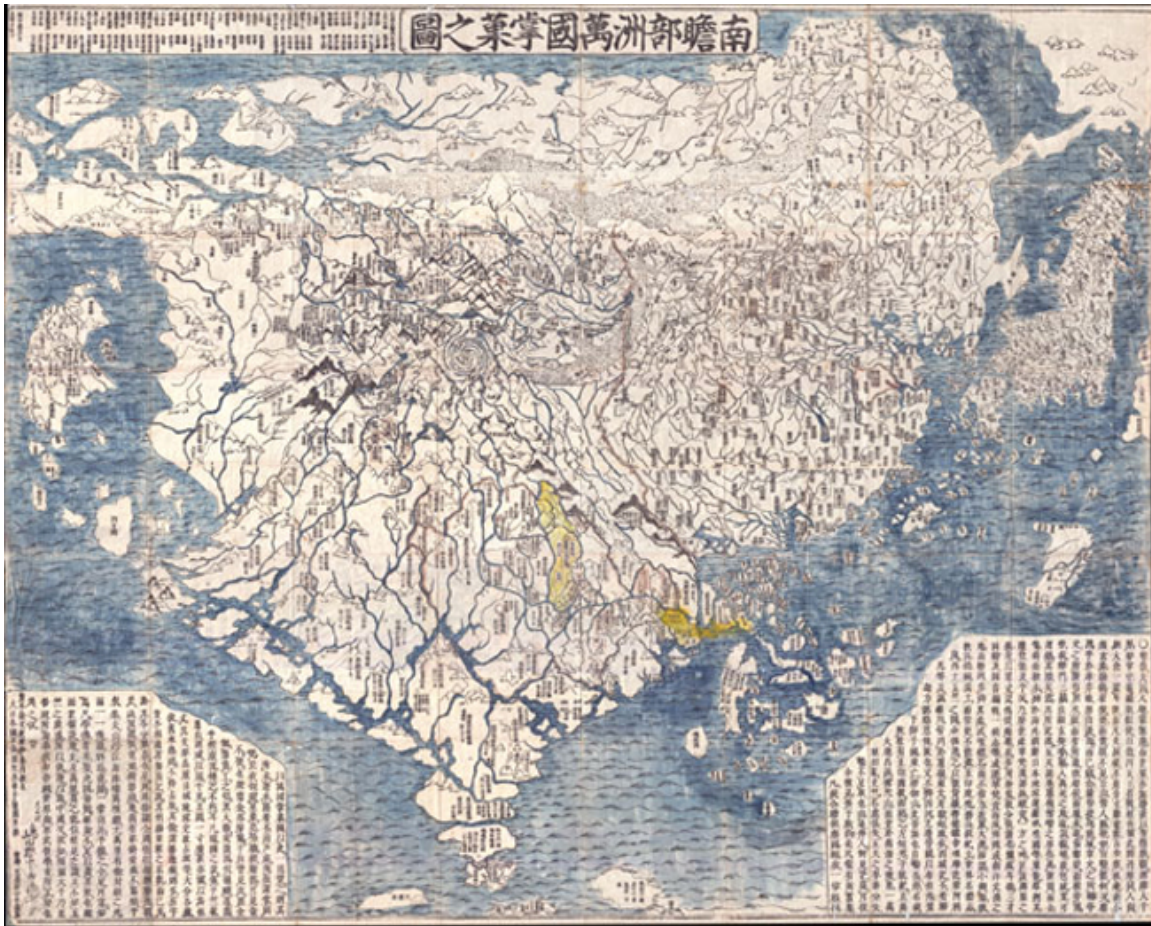
*Bankoku Sōkai Zu* by Ishikawa Toshiyuki (Ryusen), 1688, woodcut, 127 x 57.5 cm





*Shibukawa Harumi's Terrestrial Globe, 1695, 24 cm diameter,  
Jingu Historical Museum, Ise, Japan*



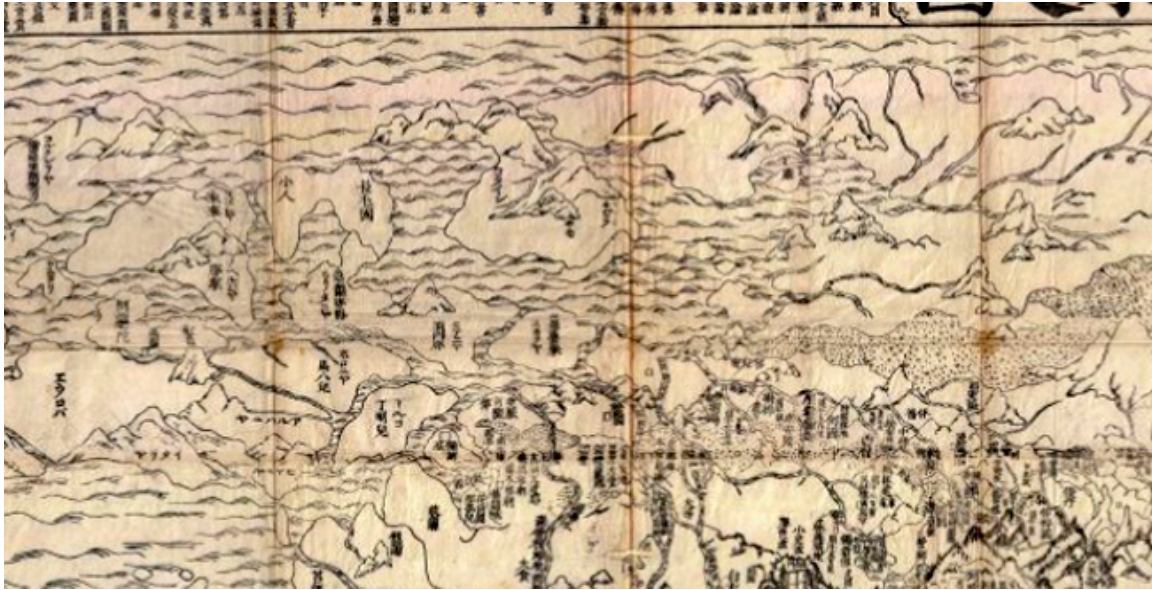


Rokashi Hotan [Zuda Rokwa Si]'s *Nansenbushu Bankoku Shoka no Zu*, 1710, woodblock print, 118 x 145.6 cm, Kobe City Museum, Japan, #510

Contains a list of Buddhist sutras, Chinese histories and other literary classics on the left side of the map title. A land bridge connects China to an unnamed continent in the upper right corner, and the island of Ezo [Japan] with its fief of Matsumae is located slightly to the south of the mystery continent. Modeled on the 1709 map of Jambudvīpa at the Kobe City Museum.

This is the first Buddhist world map printed with European geographical knowledge. The upper left corner Europe is described as a group of islands, and in the ocean south of Japan is South America as an island. Changes from the 1709 original include the omission of part of the continental outline and some unrealistic islands.





*In this uncolored copy, Europe is in the top left corner – as you can see, mostly just place names are written in – there's nothing there of any (religious) importance, it's just kind of up there, consisting of a bunch of islands. Countries like England, Holland, Hungary, Italy, France, and others are represented*



*This small island off to the West is labeled as the "Kingdom of Western Women", supposedly representing Africa*

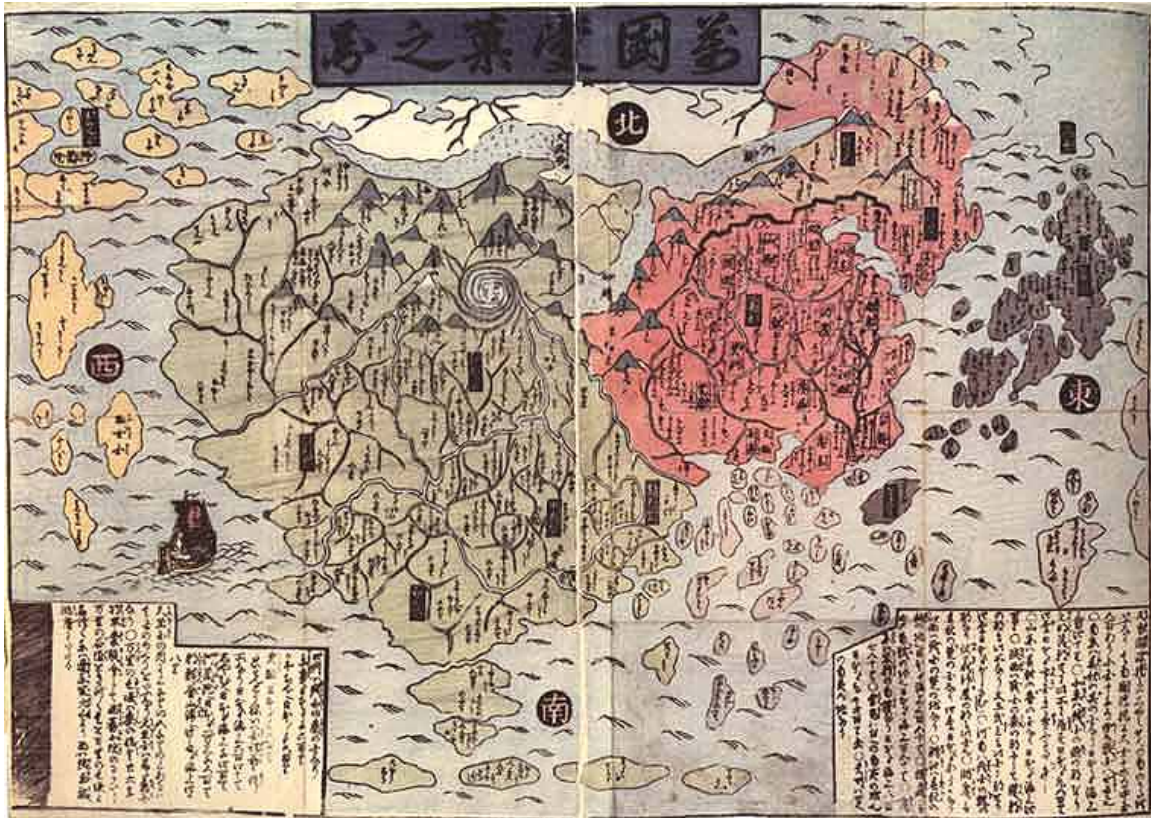




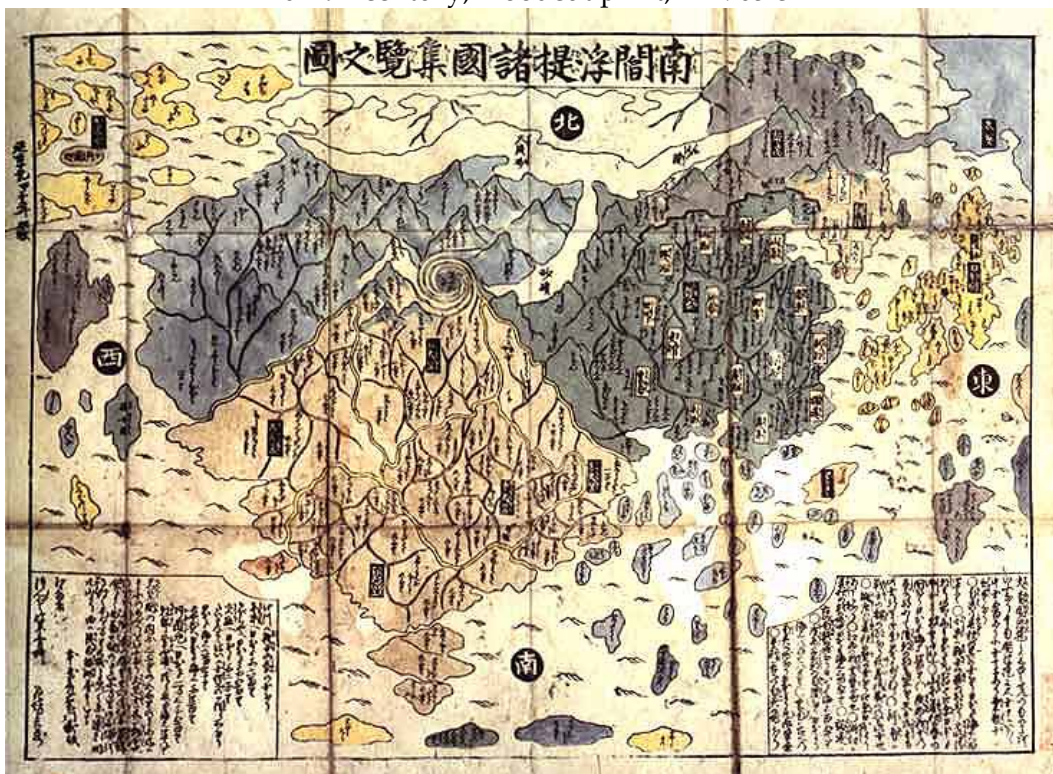
*Nansenbushu* [Buddhist Map of the World], early 19<sup>th</sup> century manuscript,  
127.5 x 152 cm, Kobe City Museum, Japan







*Bankoku Shuranzu (Bankoku Shōka no Zu), Buddhist Map of the World  
mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, woodcut print, 47 x 65 cm*



*Nan-embudai Shokoku Shuran no Zu by Kabōhyōzō, 1744, woodcut, 43.5 x 60 cm*

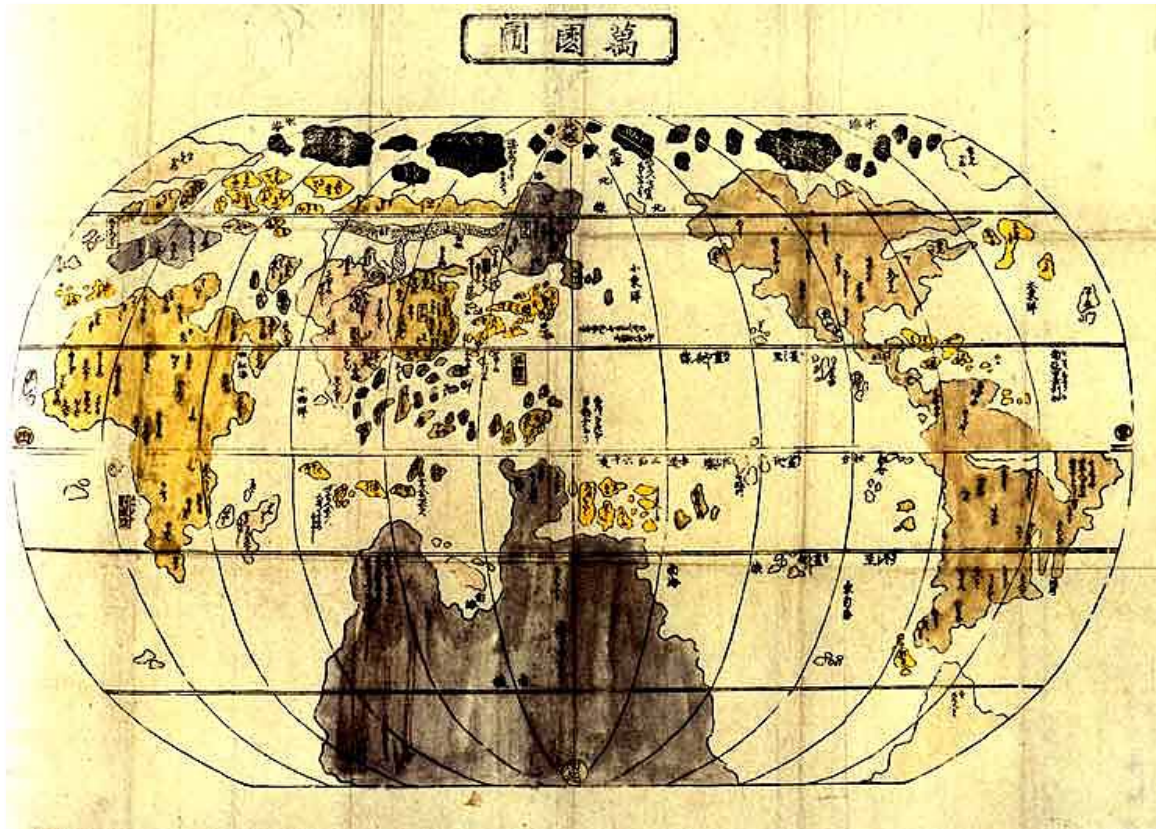




Japanese map entitled *Daimin Kyuhen Bankoku Jinseki Rotei Zenzu*  
 [The whole map of the great Ming Dynasty China, and its nine border lands (Chinese title)], Wang Jun Fu and Unemura Yahaku, Kyoto, 1645, 123.9 x 123 cm,  
 British Library

A woodcut map of China and the World, printed on multiple sheets and folding into later orange-papered covers decorated in lotus flower designs. The texts taken from the Chinese original are particularly interesting: the legend on the right gives details of the 29 strategic border crossings, and that on the left describes 33 foreign countries, with the European and African place names taken from Jesuit sources such as Ricci's 1602 map. Other texts cover details of the 13 provinces with details on population, taxation, and commodities. Very similar to the xylographic map of Ming China and the world entitled *Dàmíng jiǔ biān wànguó rén jì lùchéng quán tú* by Wang Jun Fu, 1633





*Bankoku Zu* published by Honya Hikoemon, 1744, woodcut, 50 x 68 cm

### Nagakubo Sekisui's Revised World Map

It is reasonable to assume that copies of Ricci's world maps did make it to Japan during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and were some of the first comprehensive world maps that Japan had ever seen. Considering how isolated Japan was to the rest of the world at the time, a map of the world in a language that some Japanese people could read (at least better than English, or some other European language) must have been quite revealing. Still, Ricci's maps were not necessarily widely distributed, meaning a realistic view of the world was probably a mystery to a lot of Japanese.

Then along came Nagakubo Sekisui (1717-1801). He took Ricci's world map and copied it in woodblock print form. However, Nagakubo Sekisui did not just copy maps uncritically, he also made some revisions to the map, redrew it, and added *katakana* to his copy to make it more readable.

This Sekisui map is known as the *Revised and Complete World Map* which supposedly came out in 1785. If you compare it to the original (Ricci's) you can see there is more detail, especially in and around Asia. The main difference is the art style (definitely more Japanese/Asian) as well as the fact that it is readable in Japanese. Some interesting things about Sekisui's map (as well as Ricci's map):

- Florida is the "Land of flowers"
- The Sahara Desert seems to have more water
- The "Sea of Japan" is omitted in Sekisui's, even though it is in Ricci's original



This is considered to be one of the first mainstream world maps in Japan. It was 1785, almost 200 years after Ricci made his world maps.



*Kaisei Chikyu Bankoku sankai yochi zenzu setsu*

[Revised map of all countries on the globe/ Map of the world and its mountains and oceans], Nagakubo Sekisui, Edo & Osaka, 1785, 65 x 36 inches

The texts on the upper margin include a discussion of the contribution of the Dutch to world mapping. The map generally keeps the Chinese characters used by Ricci, but sometimes they are transformed into Japanese characters. The texts around the map include some interesting descriptions of Brazil it notes, "The inhabitants of this country do not build houses. They dig the earth and live in caverns. They like to eat human flesh, however they only eat men and not women. Their clothes are made from birds feathers". Ricci, in turn, based this map upon the Flemish cartographer Abraham Ortelius' 1570 world map. Ricci reorients the map to place Asia at the center of the world (Ortelius placed Europe at the center). The Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans traded places and China became the commanding landmass.

The geography on Sekisui's map provides a superb example of Japan's view of the world during its long period of isolation. No Great Lakes are delineated in America, and California, which had been depicted as an island on many European maps of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, is a peninsula on his map. That is not because the mapmaker had access to the latest geographical information but because his model predated the island theory. The North Pole is made up of an unfamiliar group of islands while the South Pole is the fictional, unexplored continent of *Magellanica*.

Ricci's map was covered with long commentaries and Sekisui preserves a number of these on his map. He omits, however, remarks that are unfavorable to the Japanese: "The Japanese are warriors giving great importance to weapons, but don't appreciate intellectual activities." Sekisui generally retains Ricci's Chinese characters, though sometimes they are adapted to make them more understandable to the Japanese readers. The name of *Magellan*, for example, is transformed into *Mekara* in the commentary.

Sekisui's authority as a cartographer was held in high esteem until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. His world map made a strong impression on other mapmakers, and it was widely imitated, becoming the standard delineation for the rest of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and well into the 19<sup>th</sup>.

For roughly 250 years Japan was subject to one ruling family - the Tokugawa family - who was known for imposing rigid social orders and strict isolationism from foreign contact and trade. The little contact they had with Europeans from 1603-1868 came from Dejima, a small man-made island in Nagasaki's harbor. This island was home to the Dutch East India Company who enjoyed a European trading monopoly with Japan. Any other Europeans that docked in a Japanese port during the Edo period would be put to death without a trial. The complete isolationism nurtured a boom in Japanese culture. Art, entertainment, and fashion became points of interest among urban populations. Around the early 1800's European intrusions were on the rise. To understand these new "barbarians", *Rangaku* became important to the Japanese in understanding and defeating the foreign enemies. *Rangaku* literally means "Dutch Learning", and by extension "Western Learning") and was a body of knowledge developed by Japan through its contacts with the Dutch enclave of Dejima, which allowed Japan to keep abreast of Western technology and medicine in the period when the country was closed to foreigners, 1641-1853, because of the Tokugawa shogunate's policy of national isolation (*sakoku*). Growing interest in the west only increased after a peasant uprising in 1830 forced the Japanese to acknowledge the growing issues within their country. As more citizens looked to the West for answers, Japanese officials tightened their anti-foreigner policy once again. This only caused more unrest amongst the people and invited in more westerners trying to establish trade relations.

During this time period, while several versions of Matteo Ricci's world map were still used in Japan, maps of the two hemispheres were being directly imported from Holland and, in translation, were coming into popular favor. It may well be that Yoshiharu Koyano, in preparing his *Bankoku Ichiran Zu*, shown below, had taken as a model such a map of the two hemispheres as Sokichi Hashimoto's *Oranda Shinyaku Chikyui Zenzu* [Map of the World Newly Translated from Dutch Sources], issued in 1796, besides some Ricci-type map in a Japanese version. But Koyano explains in the prefatory note of his map that, as the new type of map brought from Holland is too detailed for children to understand he intends to draw up a plain and easy one chiefly for educational purpose. It is a world map with Asia in its center, but the continents are deformed to a degree that has no parallel. Again in his prefatory note, he gives the excuse that he had to pack all into so limited a space; but we may still suspect that this deformation reflects in the old Asia-centric conception of the world. On the other hand, Japan is drawn disproportionately large and placed side-by-side with China and India, so that these three countries lie in a row. This is no doubt based on the view, held by the Japanese people from remote ages, that the world consists of three countries, namely, India, China, and Japan. And India, as here represented is still the Holy Land of Buddhism drawn as in Hotan's map. This plainly shows how Hotan's map encouraged these map-makers to perpetuate so archaic a world-picture and provided materials for it.

The high standard of map-making in Japan at that time is illustrated by the *Shintei Bankoku Zenzu* [Revised Comprehensive Map of All Countries], compiled by Kageyasu Takahashi, the finest world map of the Edo period, which appeared in copper plate print in 1810, the year following the publication of Koyano's map (*shown below*). By



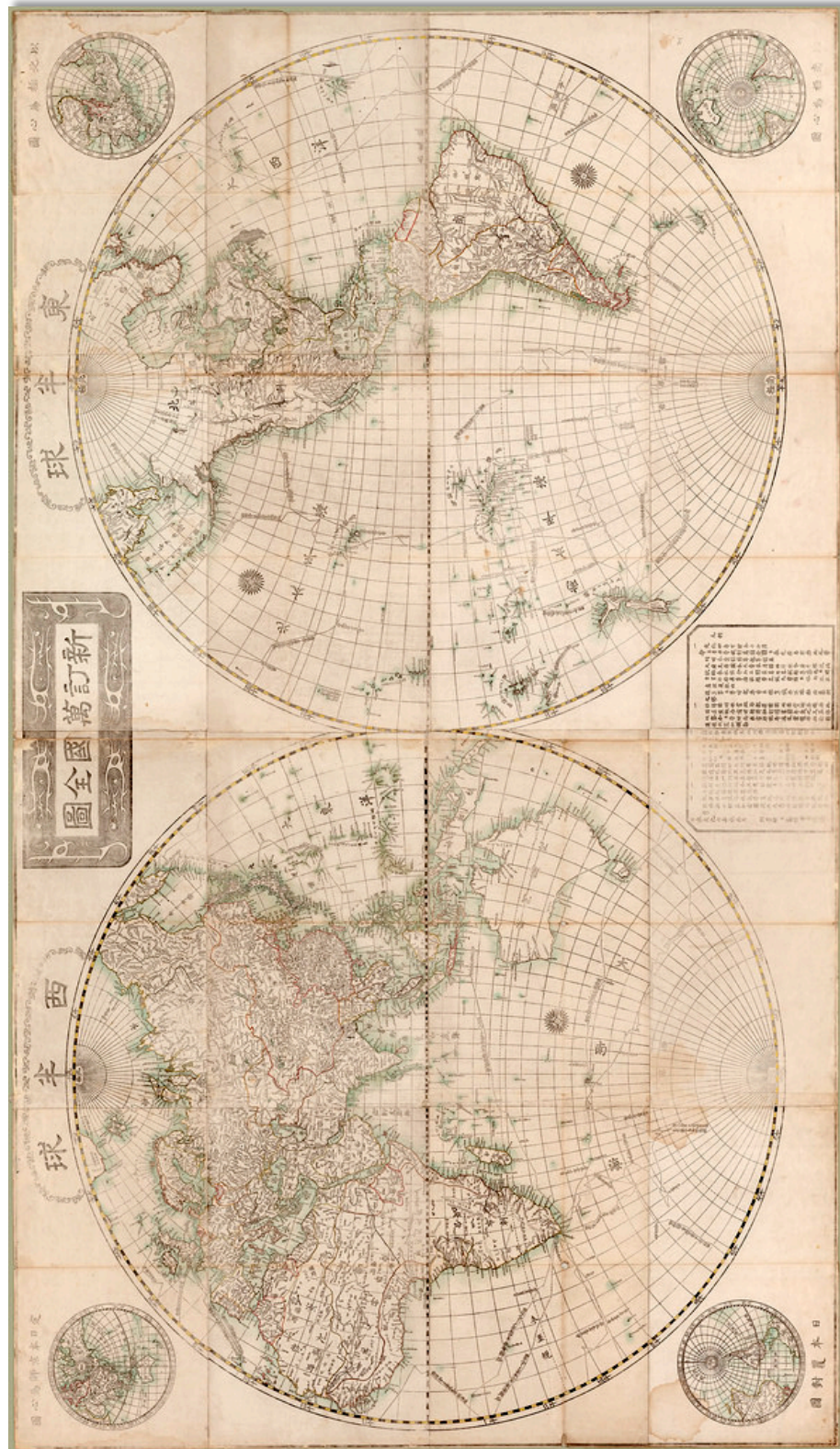
comparison, Koyano's map is crude and unscientific, but it reflected the mentality of the masses who, while vaguely accepting the representation in European maps, still felt nostalgia for the traditional image of the world.



*Bankoku Ichiran Zu* [Outline of All Countries on Earth]  
by Yoshiharu Koyano, 1809, woodcut, 106 x 139 cm.

Note the exaggerated enlargement of Japan, the crude outlines of India and Africa and the total distortion of the Americas on the right-hand side

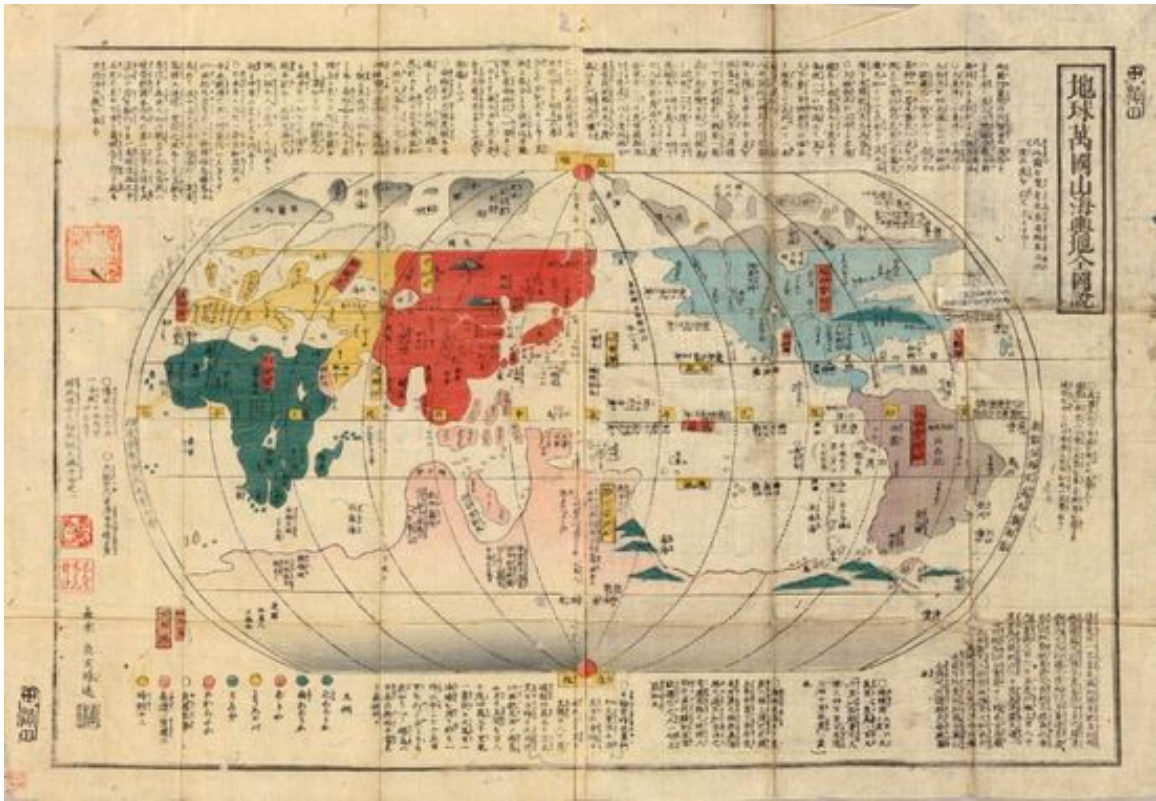




*Shintei Bankoku Zenzu* [Revised Comprehensive Map of All Countries], compiled by Kageyasu Takahashi, the finest world map of the Edo period, copper plate print, 1810



This world map, published under the title *Shintei Bankoku Zenzu* [Revised Comprehensive Map of All Countries], prepared at the request of the Government by the Court Astronomer Kageyasu Takahashi (1785-1829) and by Shigeromi Hazama (1756-1816) bears the date *Bunkwa* 7<sup>th</sup> Year (1810). It was engraved in copper and hand-colored by Aodo. As Takahashi states in the accompanying text to his written in Chinese, he was given the order to prepare an improved universal map at the end of 1807. His map shows the eastern and the western hemispheres. The corners of the huge sheet accommodate, moreover, four small maps (each with a diameter of 16.5 cm): a hemisphere with Japan in the center, the North Pole hemisphere, the hemisphere of the South Atlantic, and the South Pole hemisphere. Takahashi's map served as a model for numerous later maps down to modern times. It was republished in 1855 by Kaiko Yamaji under the title of *Jutei Bankoku Zenzu* and again in 1871 by the Daigaku Nanko, later the Tokyo University. The author of this map is the same Takahashi who was principally concerned in the case which in the winter of 1828 led to the expulsion from Japan of Baron Philipp Franz von Siebold. Philipp Franz Balthasar von Siebold (1796 - 1866), a distant relative of mine, was a German physician, botanist, and traveler. He achieved prominence by his studies of Japanese flora and fauna and the introduction of Western medicine in Japan. He was the father of the first female Japanese doctor, Kusumoto Ine. In 1826 Siebold made the court journey to Edo. During this long trip he collected many plants and animals. But he also obtained from the court astronomer Takahashi Kageyasu several detailed maps of Japan and Korea (written by Chukey Inō Tadataka), in exchange for a number of Russian works and a new map of the Dutch possessions; an act strictly forbidden by the Japanese government. When the Japanese discovered, by accident, that Siebold had a map of the northern parts of Japan, the government accused him of high treason and of being a spy for Russia. The Japanese placed Siebold under house arrest and expelled him from Japan on 22 October 1829. Takahashi was thrown into jail and died there.

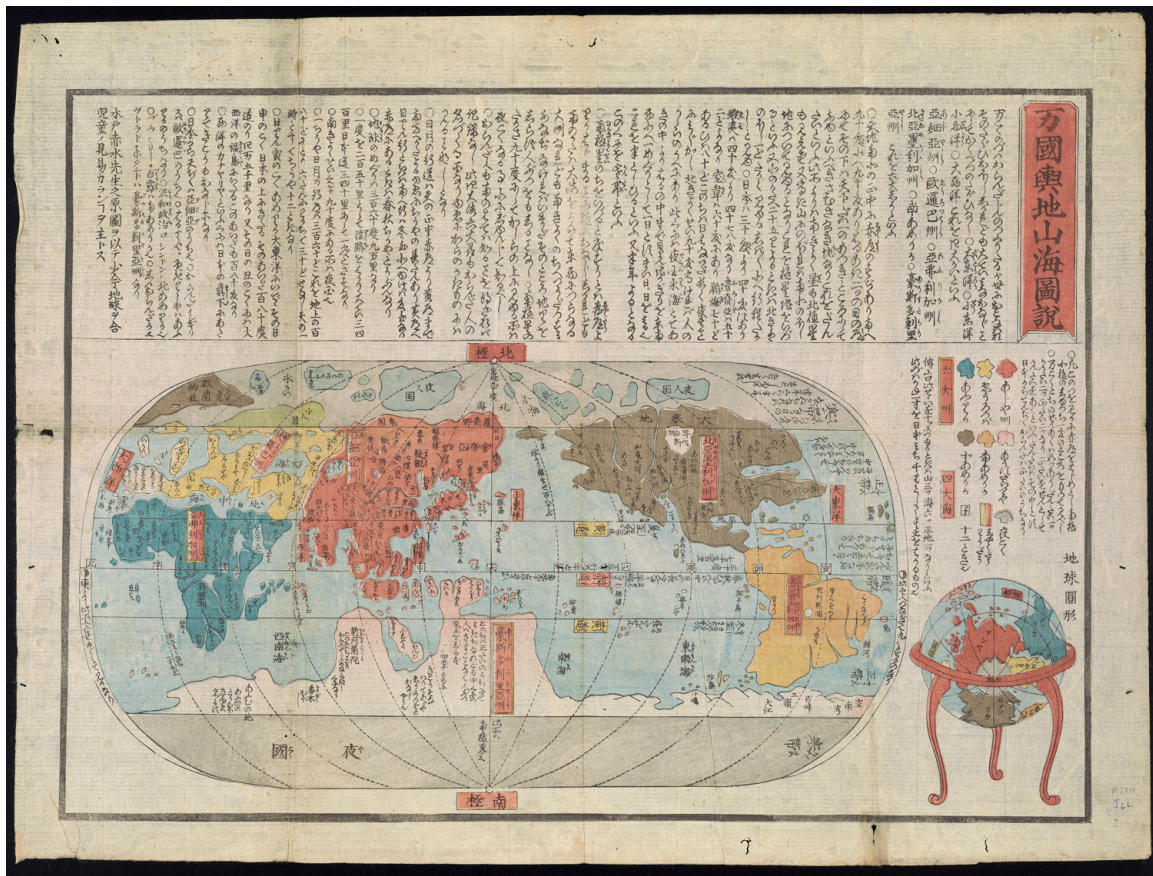


*Chikyu bankoku sankai yochi zenzu*, Sekisui Cho Harutaka, 1850

The map shown above was completed in 1850 is a prime example of the increasing interest the Japanese were developing in the West. This world map displays a fusion of the artistic culture that had blossomed in the Edo period (1603-1868) and the desire to understand how the rest of the world functioned and interacted with each other. Instead of focusing solely on Japan's towns and provinces, the mapmaker indicates the value of trading internationally while stylistically holding on to Japanese traditions. Many maps made in this era disregard geographical accuracy, believing that this was inevitable. In comparison to European made maps from nearly a century prior, the level of accuracy is years advanced.

Japan began reluctantly opening its borders to American traders. This hurt Japan's economy but opened up the country to Western culture. By 1859, western texts and literature were being translated by the government and western military schools led by the Dutch were allowed. Japan ushered in a new era in 1868 when the final Tokugawa resigned and all Japanese borders were opened. Maps from this point on take on a very distinctly European look and cartographers begin paying close attention to the accuracy of their pieces. This map from 1850 is a rare piece representing a time in which Japan was on the brink of a major cultural change. It retains the Edo period's style and execution while acknowledging Japan's place in the booming world trade markets.





*Bankoku Yochi Sankai Zusetsu*  
[The World Map with Explanations of Lands and Oceans] 1850

The anonymous *Bankoku yochi sankai zusetsu* shown above features a world map, on an oval projection, descriptive text, and a globe. It is one of many similar world maps, most anonymous and undated, that were printed in the last eighty years of the Edo period (1788-1868). While official state policy held Japan in isolation from the rest of the world, Chinese and Dutch merchants were permitted to land and trade at Nagasaki, providing a narrow avenue for cultural exchange. The anonymous author of this world map acknowledged its derivation from Dutch sources, noting that Dutch world maps were all similar to one another in geographical content, although he also claimed its derivation from the work of the master cartographer Nagakubo Sekisui. As mentioned above, Sekisui derived his 1788 world map from the oval-shaped world map published in Beijing in 1602 by the Italian-born missionary Matteo Ricci and started the genre of pedagogic world maps exemplified by this map.

#### Translation

Note: The translation of the text on this map into English was made somewhat demanding because of the need to decipher the old Japanese script. Even though the three types of character used on this map (hiragana, katakana, and kanji) are still the main components of modern Japanese, understanding and reading through the archaisms is difficult. The process was therefore, first, to translate the Japanese archaisms into modern Japanese and, second, to translate these into English. Some parts

of the text have been easily translated into colloquial English; other parts necessarily remain more literal. *Italicized* place names were spelled out phonetically (although using kanji rather than the modern phonetic hiragana or katakana). Clarifications appear in notes, in the form <sup>n</sup> located at the end of the translation.

The text is divided into paragraphs in the original, the start of each paragraph being marked by a circle. The text is in two parts. The main part runs right-to-left across the entire Upper Register of the image, starting with the title highlighted in red. The Lower Register, again from right to left, contains further text and legend, below which is a globe, and then the map itself.

#### *Upper Register*

The world maps spread through the world [i.e., printed/published] were made by the Dutch, with plenty of variation. However, they are usually identical [i.e., in their geographical outlines] and there are no remarkable differences between them.

There are the four great oceans: the farther<sup>1</sup> eastern ocean [i.e., Atlantic], the nearer eastern ocean [i.e., Pacific], the nearer western ocean [i.e., Indian], and the farther western ocean [i.e., Atlantic, again].

The six continents [or province, region], Asia, Europe, Africa, the North America, the South America, and Australia, are called the six biggest regions.

Dividing the earth into the north and the south, there is the equator in the center. In latitude, the equator is 90 degrees from both the north and the south poles. The equator is where the sun passes overhead on the spring equinox and autumn equinox. The hottest region in the world is directly on the equator, and there is no cold season like our winter. This region is called the torrid zone.<sup>2</sup> From there, neither Polaris nor the southern pole star<sup>3</sup> can be seen. Climbing up the high mountain, Polaris and the south star can be seen as if they stick to the horizon. This phenomenon is called “The polestars on the ground.” Moreover, as you move just 25 ri [98 km/61 miles] northerly, Polaris can be seen higher; thus, as you go farther to the north, it can be found higher [in the sky].

Japan is located in latitude 30 to 40 degrees north. Ezo [i.e., present-day Hokkaido] is in latitude 40 to 47 or 48 degrees north. Russia is around 52 degrees north. Shitsui [i.e., northeastern China, or Manchuria] is in latitude 60 degrees north. Bokkai [i.e., the Korean kingdom] is around 70 to 80 degrees north. In Bokkai, hours of sunlight are very long, and night is very short. Since Polaris is at an altitude of 90 degrees, it is twinkling above people. The country is called “the night country with icy ocean.” In this region, the sun can be seen all day from the middle of autumn to the middle of spring [sic];<sup>4</sup> furthermore, the sun rotates around the horizon in turn from the east, south, west, and north to make a day. Thus, the sun can be seen every day. This phenomenon is called night under the midnight sun. Conversely, from winter to spring time, there is the polar night, and the region that the country belongs to is the Frigid Zone.

Leaving [for] the South Pole, the [counting of] degree[s] of latitude starts from the equator, and this is the same thing as leaving [for]<sup>5</sup> the North Pole. However, even though the South Pole has a big ocean and is a continent ranging east and west, the



geography of the place is not yet given in detail because there are no ocean lanes to the South Pole. There is also no information about the people living there.

Based on the northern region, you may speculate that the [southern]<sup>6</sup> region is the “night country” when the south star is at an altitude of 90 degrees.

Since the Dutch do not know the end [extent?] of the south, either, there is no record about the South Pole. The four biggest oceans and the six biggest regions are also named by the Dutch. Therefore, there is no record about the oceans and the provinces in Chinese volumes [i.e., in Chinese sources].

[Seen] from the ground [i.e., in Japan], the orbits of the sun and the moon pass to the south from the equator along the ecliptic;<sup>7</sup> hence, there is the difference in the length of night and day. If the sun on the ecliptic goes farther south [of the equator], it becomes the winter solstice. Likewise, there is the summer solstice if the sun goes to the north [of the equator]. There is a spring and an autumn equinox when the sun is on the equator, and the lengths of night and day become equal.

The circumference of the earth is 90,000 ri [353,430 km/219,600 miles].<sup>8</sup>

The size of property is measured with a ri such that 250 ri make 1 degree; the roads of Japan are measured with a ri such that 30 to 40 ri make 1 degree.<sup>9</sup>

The region where the altitude of the south star is 90 degrees is the night country.<sup>10</sup>

The sun and the moon take a day to pass through 360 degrees. 180 degrees on the ground <unclear>. Dividing 180 degrees into 6 parts with 30 degrees each corresponds to 1 hour [sic] <sup>11</sup> in the cosmic motion. Therefore, night and day are 12 hours each.

The sun rises in America and the farther eastern ocean when it is 6:00 am, and when it is 6:00 pm on the same day, the sun rises in Japan. Meanwhile, the degree of the motion of the sun is 180, and the distance is 45,000 ri (176,715 km/109,809 miles). Moreover, at 4:00 am (the day after the sun rises in America), it reaches on Fukushima in the Atlantic with 180 degrees in motion.

Canarias [Canary Islands] in the west is at the same latitude as Japan and its climate is very similar to Japan's.

From Japan to India is Asia.

Netherlands and Great Britain are in Europe.

Nigeria is in Africa.

Washington under the republic is in North America.

Brazil and <unclear> are in South America.

<unclear> and <unclear> are in Australia.

This map is based on the original (*Kaitei Nihon Yochi Rotei Zenzu*, 1779) by the master Nagakubo Sekisui,<sup>12</sup> and the purpose of the map is to make it easy for children to look [comprehend] by adding the globe to it.

*Lower Register*

Before looking at this map make sure the positions of the equator, the South Pole, and North Pole <remainder unclear>.

In the world, there is the good and evil of lands. The lands are divided into five parts: one temperature zone [i.e., torrid], two frigid zones and two general zones [i.e., temperate]. While the temperature zones are the good, the frigid zones are evil. From Japan to India to Netherland is in the general zone.

- [red splotch] Asia
- [yellow splotch] Europe
- [blue splotch] Africa
- [pink splotch] Australia
- [orange splotch] South America
- [dark grey splotch] North America
- [light grey splotch] Night Country [n13]
- [red rectangle] Equator
- [yellow rectangle] Tropics
- [white square] Twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac [used on the map to mark meridians, along the Equator]
- [red box with yellow frame] Six biggest continents
- [red box with simple frame] Four biggest oceans

According to some stories, this world is divided into 10 regions; thus, there are 3 mountains, 6 oceans, and 1 flat land. This map is designed for measuring the area of the land with the scale of 1 sun [30cm/11.8 inches] corresponding to 10 ri [39.27 km/24.4 miles].

## Notes:

1. farther and nearer are written literally as “big” and “small,” but in this context both terms seemingly refer not to magnitude but to distance.
2. Torrid zone is literally written as “temperature zone,” clearly indicating the zone of significant or high temperatures.
3. While Western astronomy does not recognize a southern equivalent to Polaris, i.e., a single star situated at the celestial south pole, the Daoist astronomical tradition did.
4. The text is wrong: at 70-80 degrees north, the sun would be visible all day during late spring, summer, and early fall.
5. The original translates as “from,” but this runs counter to the larger sense of the paragraph, which is to move across the map from the Equator southwards, just as the previous paragraph runs through places from the Equator northwards.
6. The original translates literally as “the region seen above,” which is to say the region described in the previous paragraph; set in opposition to the northern regions, this is the pole ward, southern area.
7. Literally: “From the ground, the orbits of the sun and the moon pass to the south from the equator along the ecliptic.” This passage seems to be describing a location to the north of the tropic of Cancer, where the sun is overhead only at the Summer solstice, so that the sun (and for that matter the moon) always remains to the south. It is logical to think that the intended location is Japan itself.
8. This figure is almost an order of magnitude too great; the earth’s equatorial circumference is only 24,899 miles (40,075 km) or about 10,000 ri, assuming that a standardized ri of 2.44 miles is



intended (only completely standardized in 1891, although attempted to be set by the Tokugawa shogunate); if the short ri is meant, then the error is less, but still significant.

9. Literally: “Measure the length of the land with 1 degree equal to 250 ri, the road of Japan is measured 1 degree equal to 30 to 40 ri.” Unno (1994, 384 n.154) noted that the itinerary ri varied, with 36 chō to the east of Kyōto and 48 chō to the west; he seems to have equated these, respectively, to the scales on charts of 32/33 ri and 43.75 ri to a degree of latitude. Other sources make it clear that the standard ri of 36 chō was established in 1891; previously, the Tokugawa shogunate sought to standardize the ri as 36 chō but still permitted variations. Traditionally, the ri could have 30, 36, or 48 chō. Another traditional ri had only 6 chō and seems to have been used for land measure rather than itinerary distances. This paragraph therefore seems to be trying to use ~ but without properly understanding ~ the European practice of defining units of length in terms of a degree of latitude (copied from the Dutch!) in order to say, in a very vague and ambiguous way, that land measurement uses a small ri (250 of which equal one degree) while road (itinerary) measurement uses a longer ri (30-40 of which equal one degree). The small ri seems to be of 6 chō, the long ri of 36-48 chō.

10. The repetition of a previous paragraph was perhaps the wood cutter’s error.

11. Error: 1 hour’s passage of the sun equates to 15 degrees of longitude, not 30.

12. Unno (1994, 414-15) noted that Nagakubo’s 1779 *Kaisei Nihon Yochi Rotei Zenzu* [“The Revision of the Japanese Road Map”] was actually only of Japan itself. It is more logical to think that the author actually meant to refer to Nagakubo’s 1788 *Chikyū bankoku sankai yochi zensusetsu* [“Map with an account of all the countries, lands, and seas in the world”], later known as *Kaisei chikyū bankoku zenzu* [“Revised map of all the countries in the world”]; this popular world map was based on the Chinese publication of Matteo Ricci’s oval world map (1602) and was the ultimate source for many anonymous and undated world maps, just like this one, published in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

13. That is, the Polar Regions. The South Pole is clearly grey, but the North Pole is shown in several colors. For example, Europe north of the Arctic Circle is shown in green (i.e., yellow plus grey), while the Arctic islands are in a blue-grey.

*These notes and the above translation are the product of an internship at the Osher Map Library (Maine) in the Fall 2009 semester.*

Toward the end of the Edo period, *Rangaku*, or “Dutch Learning,” dominated Japanese art and science. This map exemplifies the union of Japanese traditional printmaking and Dutch cartography. The latter half of the Edo period is known as the *Bakumatsu* era, when traditional feudal authorities resisted the increasing western influence, creating a tense social division. This map is made up of individual traditional woodcut prints on rice paper, layered together for durability, and presents the historical, social and political contexts of the *Bakumatsu* era. At the center of Edo, present-day Tokyo, the three chrysanthemum flowers mark the emperor’s throne. The flower is a symbol of the head of state as well as the Japanese legal authority. Within the central living quarters, there is a Western circle, called *nishinomaru*. The royal living quarters are surrounded by a group of mansions, called the *daimyo-koji*, or “warlord ally.” The relationship between spatial orientation and hierarchy is very clear, as all of the surrounding structures face the Chrysanthemum Throne.

These maps present the final struggle between traditional Japanese culture and Western influence. After 1850, the Japanese monarchy became increasingly unstable. In 1867 the Tokugawa Shogunate became the Meiji government, and Japan opened its doors to foreign trade after two and a half centuries of isolationist policy. The next period of Japanese history is marked by dramatic modernization.



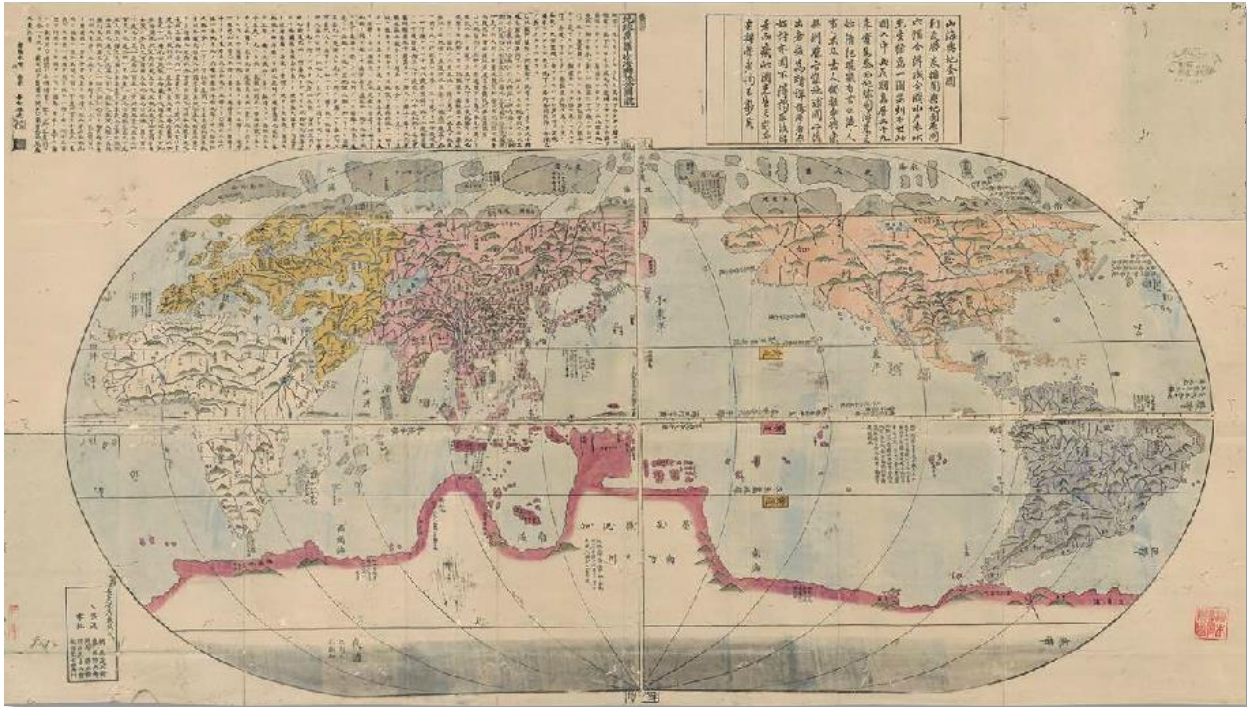


*Bankoku sokai zu [Complete Map of the Myriad Realms and Lands], Ishikawa Ryusen, 55 x 125.3 cm, woodblock print, 1708 reprint of 1688 edition, University of California Berkeley.*

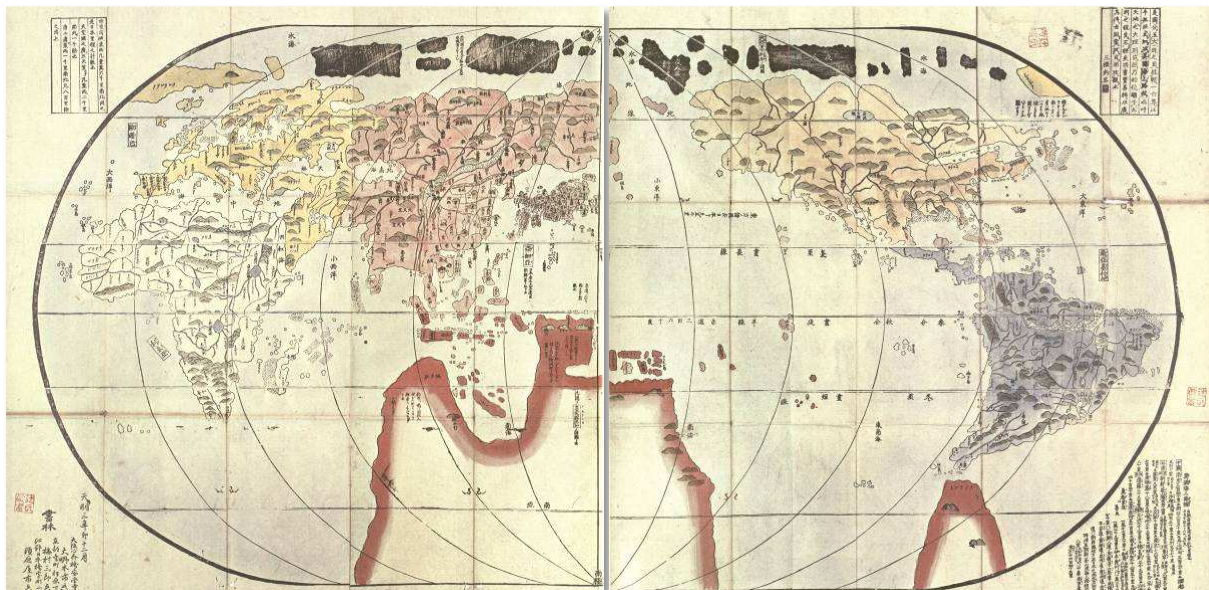


*Abe Yasuyuki, Bankoku chikyū yochi zenzu [Comprehensive Map of the Myriad Countries of the Globe], 1853*



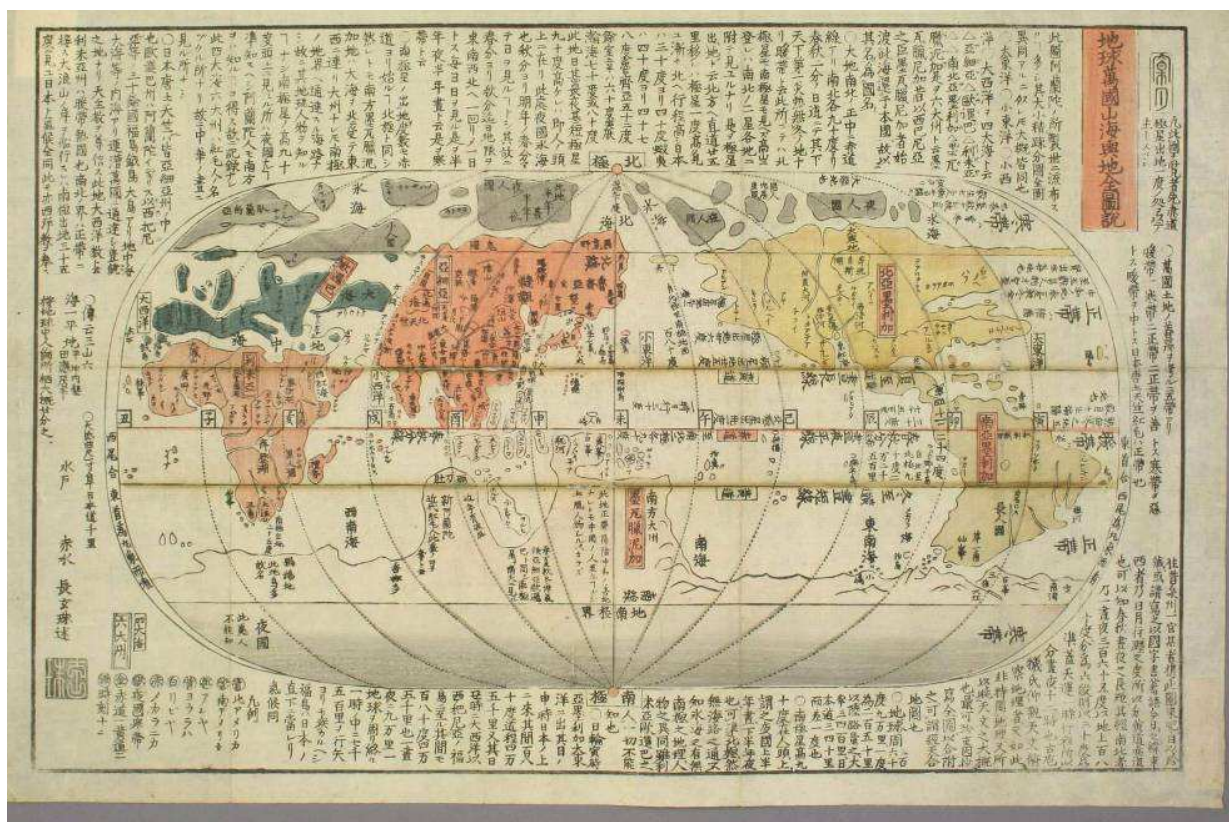


Nagakubo Sekisui, *Chikyu bankoku sankai yochi zenzusetsu* [Comprehensive Map and Description of the Geography of the Myriad Countries of the Globe], Osaka, 1788, Kobe University Library

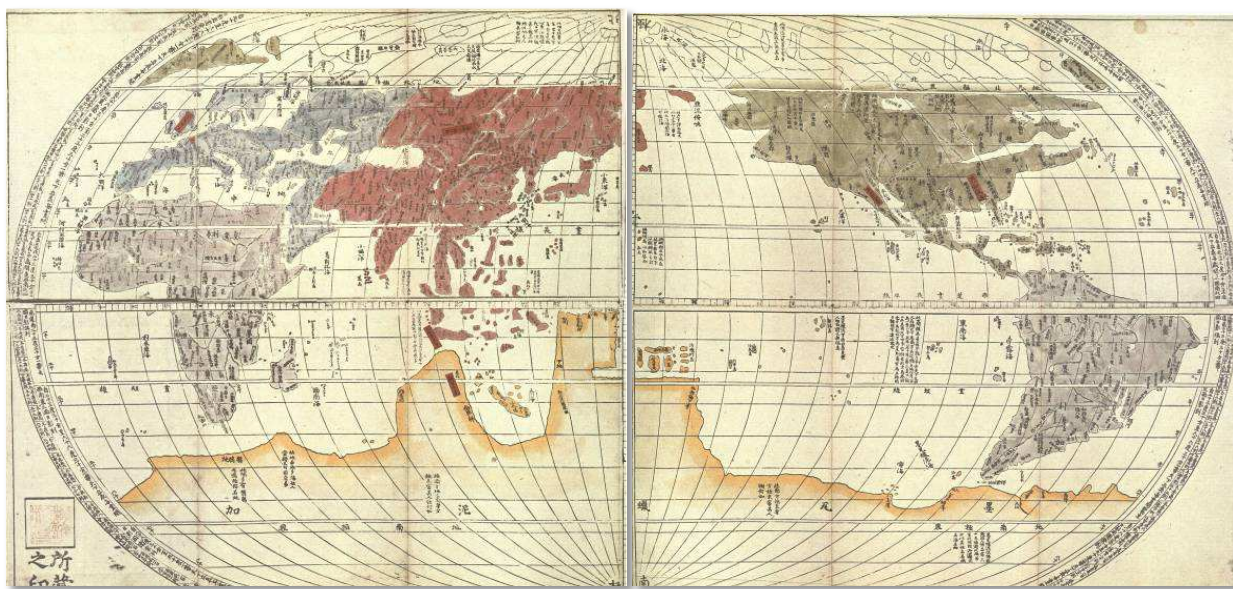


*Chikyu ichiran zu* by Mitsuhashi Chokaku, 1783, 86.5 x 164 cm woodcut





Nagakubo Sekisui, *Chikyū bankoku sankai yochi zenzusetu*, 18<sup>th</sup> century, woodblock print, 47 x 69 cm, Waseda University Library

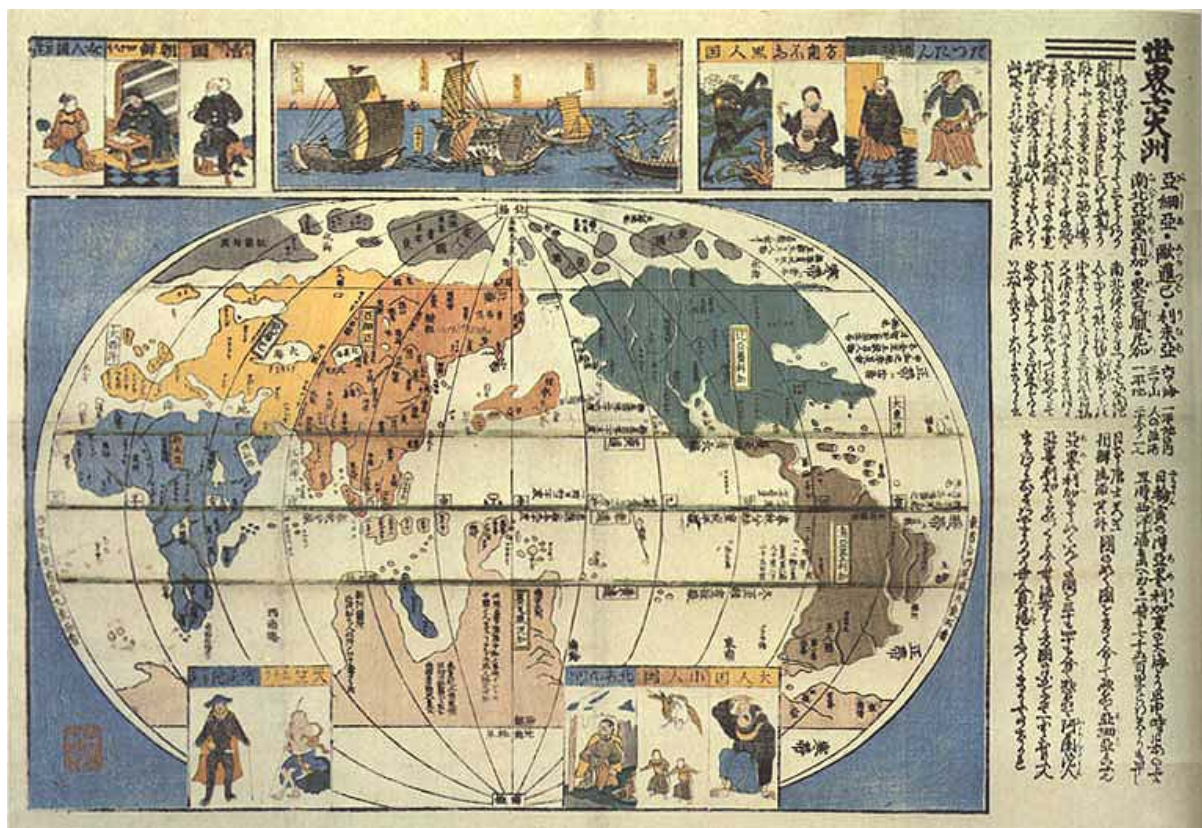


*Konyo zenzu* by Inagaki Shisen 1802, woodblock print, 54.5 x 114 cm



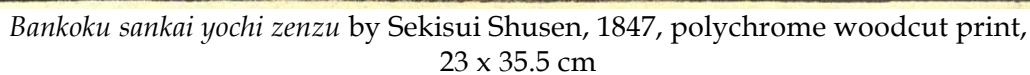


*Bankoku yochi zen-zu* by Abe Yasuyuki, 1853, woodblock print, 34.8 x 61.7 cm

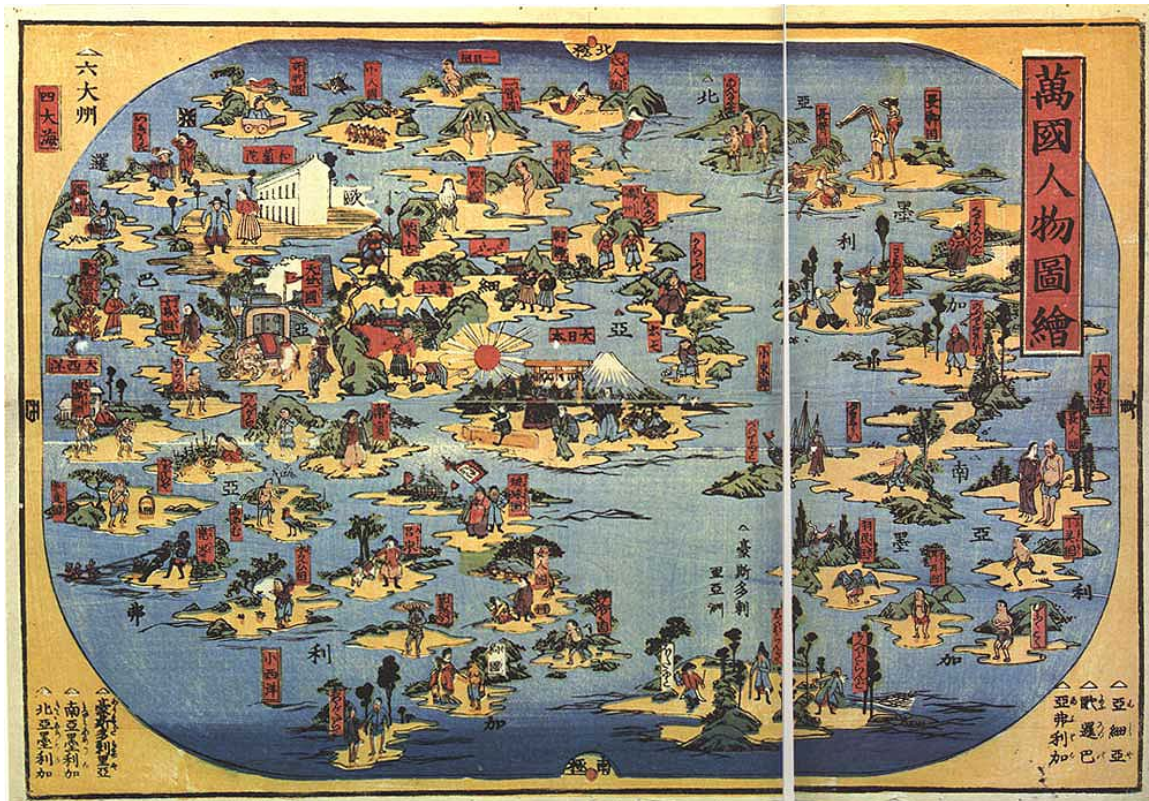


*Sekai roku daishu*, 1850, polychrome woodcut print, 35.5 x 50.5 cm

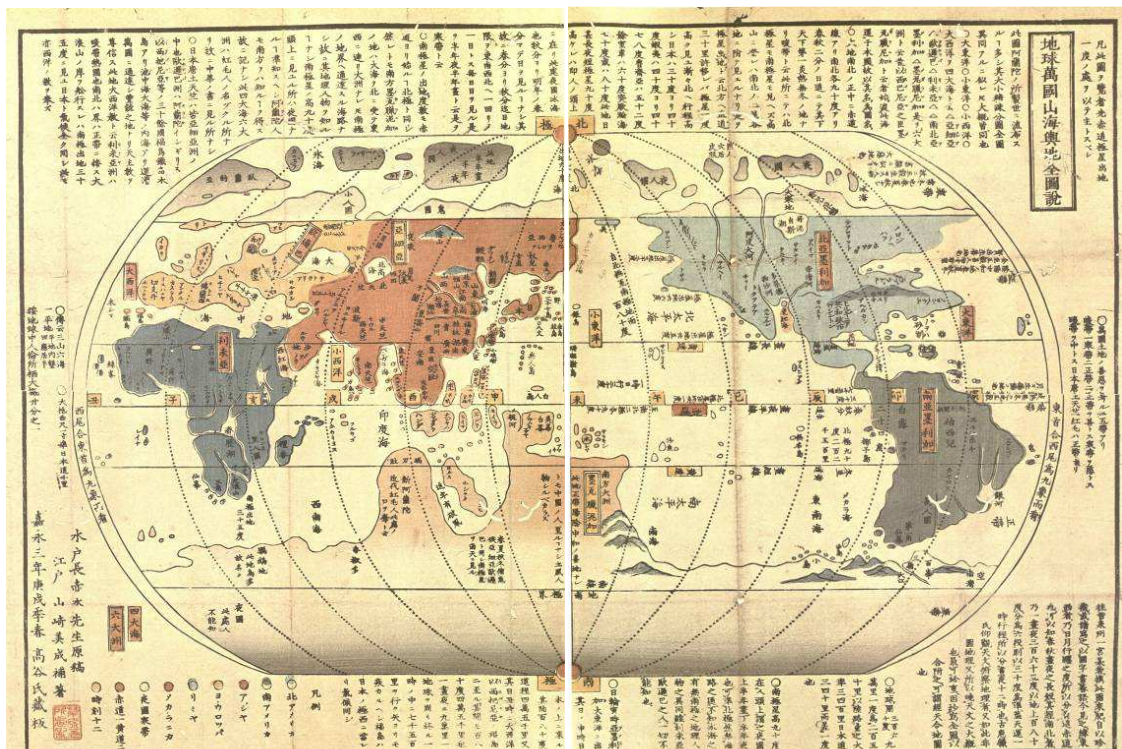






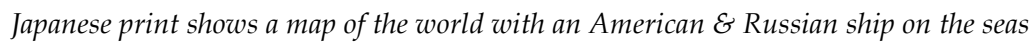


Bankoku Jinbutsu Zue [Map of the World], 1850, woodcut, 33 x 48.5 cm

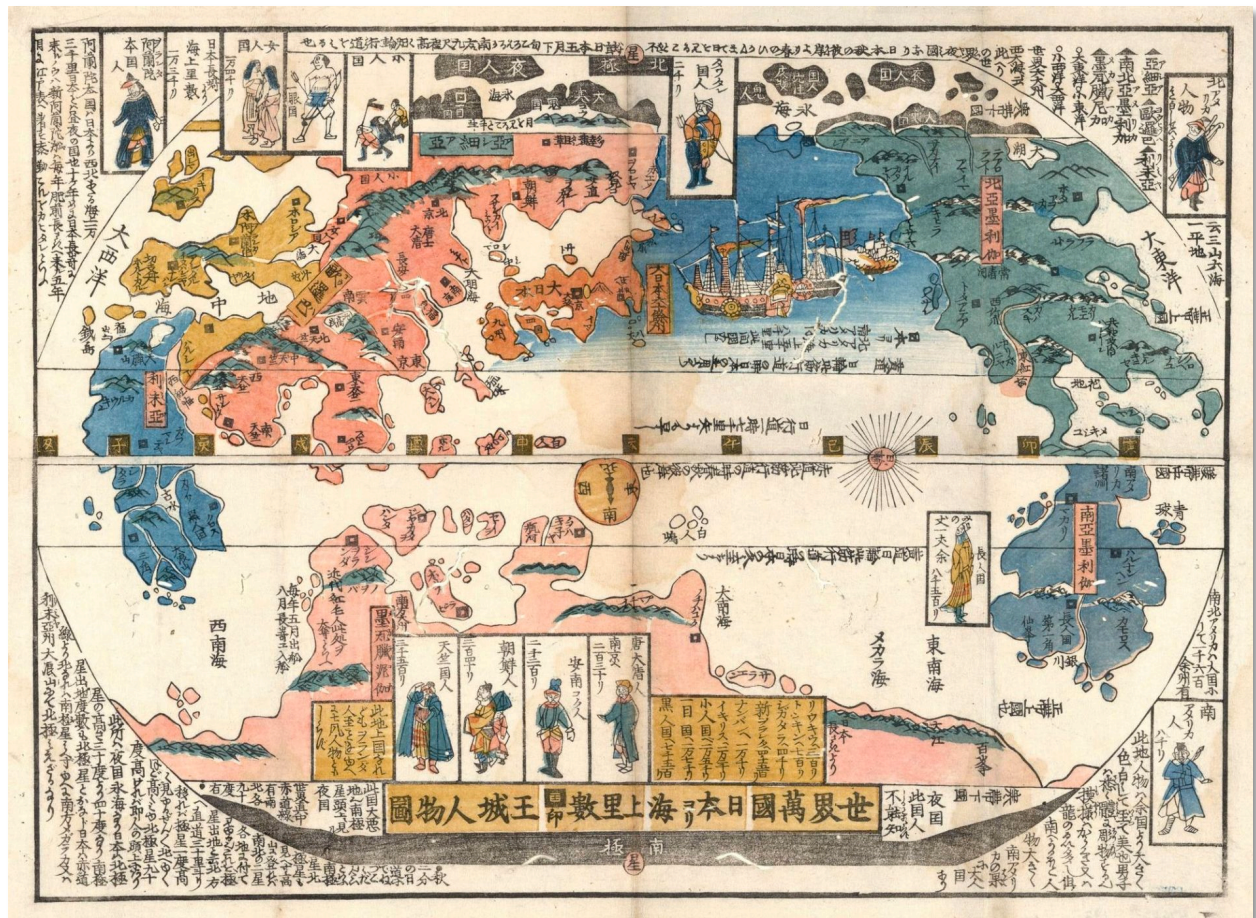


Chikyu Bankoku Sankai yochi zenzusetsu by Yamazaki Yoshinari, 1850, 40.5 x 60.5 cm  
polychrome woodcut print

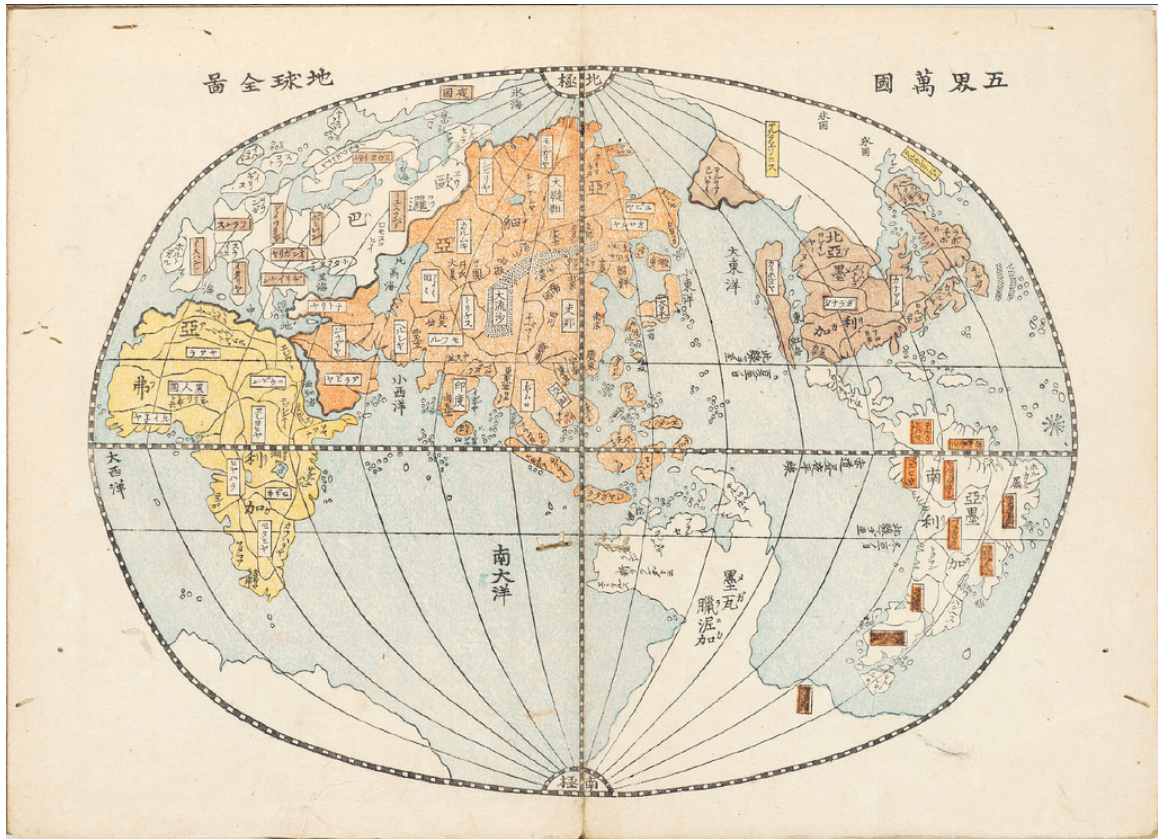






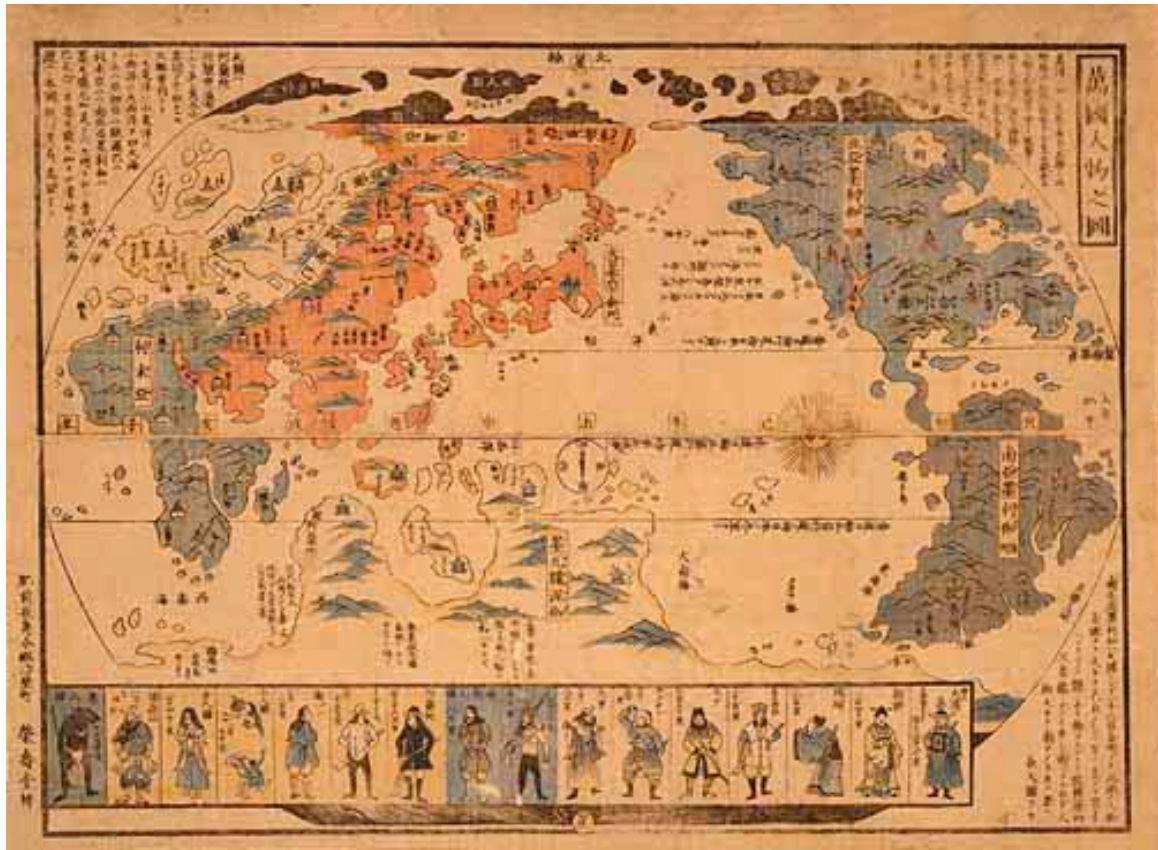


Bankoku jinbutsu no zu [People of many nations], 1870



*Dai Nihon yochi benran*, Giko Yamazaki, Tenpo 5, 1834  
 Note the long island off the west cost of North America (California?)





*Bankoku jinbutsu no zu* [People of many nations]



This map shows the Japanese archipelago (center) with the Americas on the right and Africa on the left. Some of the countries are represented by people in national dress. The map itself is printed on Washi [Japanese paper] from a woodblock measuring approximately 47 x 34 cm. Colors used are sumi (a carbon-based ink), indigo and an unidentified yellow pigment. The extreme top and bottom sections of the mount itself are indigo-dyed Japanese silks.





*Continental Map with Scenes of Forty-Eight Foreign People (Asia and Africa), late 18<sup>th</sup> century, manuscript (a pair of six-fold screens), Kobe City Museum*







*Continental Map with Scenes of Forty-Eight Foreign People (America & Europe), late 18<sup>th</sup> century, manuscript (a pair of six-fold screens), Kobe City Museum*



Generally, the scale of a map determines what it's used for. A global map gives an extensive look at the world, and can spur an overwhelming appreciation for the sheer scale and variety of the place. A local map lays out the minutiae of day-to-day experience—small streets, landmarks, and other visual markers we then imbue with our own memories and emotions.



But it's a rare map that manages both overviews and close-ups; that inspires both awe and intimacy. The two surviving *Screens of the Four Continents and People in 48 Countries in the World*, by an unknown Japanese painter, beautifully lay out the geographical arrangement of the planet, with carefully delineated countries, seas, rivers, and mountain ranges. But, like the 18<sup>th</sup> century equivalent of a National Geographic box set, they also provide detailed, surprisingly affecting snapshots of that planet's residents.



*Two couples, a continent apart, live out their daily lives next to each other on the map.*

Arranged in boxes around the continents, pairs of model citizens, dressed in culturally appropriate garb, go about their daily lives. Next to Madagascar, an African couple, draped in white linen, tends to a long-horned cow; across the embossed border, a Chinese man gestures at incoming ships, while his wife shades her face behind a fan. The map of Europe and America juxtaposes an Inuit family, backed by a whale-filled sea, with two expensively dressed Europeans overlooking a bustling town. Throughout, there are warriors, traders, musicians, fishermen, large and small families, and even, in the bottom left corner of the Africa/Asia map, a cannibalistic duo.



*Americans rub elbows with Europeans.*

The maps—which are over five feet tall and just under 12 feet wide (362.8 x 163.8 cm)—were originally attached to a latticework of wood to form a *byōbu*, or folding screen. *Byōbu* are light and flexible, and can be used to divide architectural spaces into any number of configurations. Extended fully, they add decoration to the middle of a large room; bent to encompass a corner, they form an intimate space. Placed next to each other and folded along the visible creases, these particular maps could have wrapped 18<sup>th</sup> century viewers in a panoramic view of the known world, complete with plenty of ambassadors.



*Detail from the upper border of the Africa/Asia map.*

The paintings date to sometime between 1718 and 1800, during a middle stage of the Edo period. During this time, Japan was isolated from much of the world due to the reigning shogunate's *Sakoku* [locked country] foreign policy program. *Sakoku* threatened death to anyone who crossed the border in either direction—adding extra pathos to this unknown artist's renderings of friendly foreigners.



Until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Japanese experience with and knowledge of the world was limited to its neighboring lands, such as China, Korea, and India. Beyond the realm of Japan lay worlds formed through fascination and the imagination. In 1543, however, this changed with the appearance of the Portuguese, who journeyed to Japan in the pursuit of new lands to develop trade and to spread Christianity. The Portuguese and their culture had a strong impact on Japanese thoughts and activities, including the creation of many folding screens with European motifs and new views of the world at large. These screens prompted viewers to acknowledge a more distinctive “Self”. The end of the 16<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries was a transitional moment for both the Jesuits and Portugal. Religiously, the Jesuits were in conflict with the Japanese government and, as well their authority was undermined by Mendicants from the Philippines. These conflicts were compounded further by the spread of Protestantism in Europe. Similarly, after a short prosperous trade in Asia, rising economic and political power of the Netherlands and England gradually pushed Portuguese trade out of Asia. In these screens one can detect the emergence of sense of a Japanese “Self”, that was forged in relation to the Europeans. Although the screens give the impression of the orderly and peaceful world, they mask the unstable situation which the Jesuits and Portugal were experiencing at the time. Rather than articulating a Japanese view of the world, the screens maintained the notion of a powerful Catholic world.







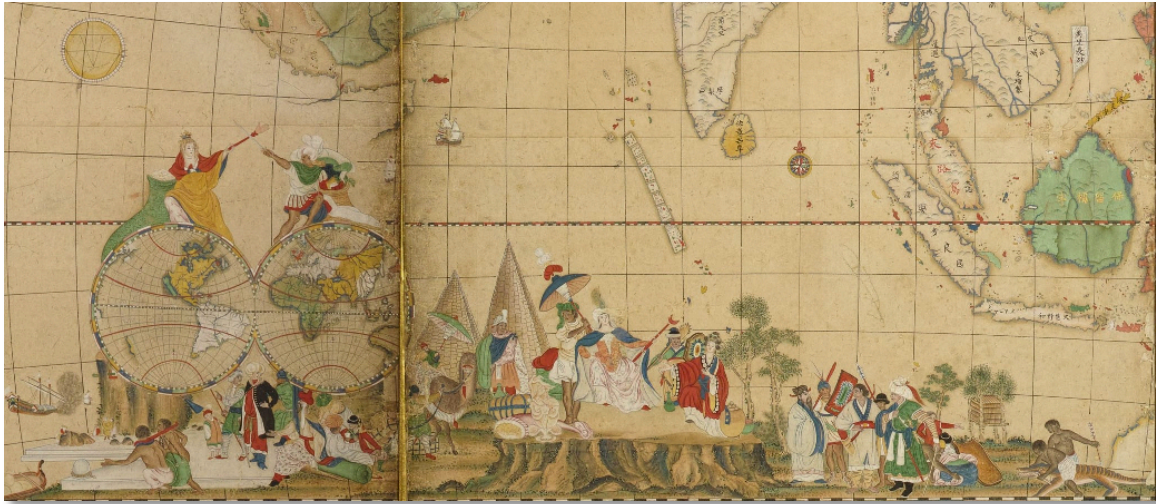












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